Daily Report

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FBIS-SOV-91-241 *16 December 1991*

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NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

NOTICE TO READERS: The United States Government recognizes the independence of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

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Arms Control & Disarmament

NATO 'Concerned' With Nuclear Arms Control

PM1612151791 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 16 Dec 91 Union Edition p 3

[G. Deynichenko report: "NATO Bloc Concerned With Soviet Nuclear Potential"]

[Text] The NATO defense ministers' regular meeting last week in Brussels was overshadowed, almost as in the old days, by the "Soviet question." This time the development of events in the former Soviet Union, which almost every serious newspaper describes as "potentially dangerous," is arousing growing concern in NATO circles.

Analysis of the statements and press commentaries made in Brussels allows us to single out three groups of problems that are arousing the greatest misgivings among NATO military leaders. First, there is above all the question of who is exercising control over the Soviet strategic nuclear forces. Evidently the reassuring statements being heard these days in Moscow, Kiev, and Minsk have been considered inadequate in the West, especially since the new Commonwealth's assurances that the nuclear arms are under unified control are accompanied by contradictory facts. Some of the Western press is agitated by the statement issued by Belarus Defense Minister P. Chaus to the effect that the nuclear weapons sited in the republic "must not be hurriedly handed over to someone else." Another section of the press has hurriedly set about calculating the nuclear missile potential of the Black Sea Fleet, which is now part of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, and regarding whose nuclear arms Kiev has made no intelligible provisos.

However, the very nature of nuclear weapons is such that any omissions, inaccuracies, or slips of the tongue are inadmissible in the political formulas concerning the future of these weapons. As long as there is uncertainty, albeit only apparent uncertainty, NATO prefers to retain the kind of order that would ensure "strict central control and reliable political control" over nuclear missile weapons in our country.

The second group of problems that aroused Western military circles' concern, once again despite the Commonwealth's assurances, was the future of the CFE Treaty. As you know, the Soviet Union signed this treaty as an integral state. The restrictions on armed forces for which the treaty makes provision as well as the geographical borders for siting military hardware apply to the Union as a whole. But will the individual republics comply with these terms? Our Western partners are not confident about that. U.S. Secretary of State J. Baker is even warning of the danger of an "internal arms race among the former Soviet republics, which poses a potential serious threat to European security."

Last, NATO feels some concern for the future of its own plans for cuts in military spending. These plans are pretty significant, both in themselves and owing to the economic and financial difficulties experienced by leading Western countries. The United States has already announced a 25-percent cut in its armed forces and is contemplating further, more radical steps in this field. If that program is approved, the U.S. Army will be reduced by a third—700,000 soldiers. NATO as a whole plans to almost halve its forces in Central Europe by 1995.

The defense ministers gathered in Brussels took the view that the changes in our country as yet do not impede their plans for drawing in their military structures in Europe. However, a final decision on reorganizing NATO armed forces has been postponed until early next year.

As for the problems of control over Soviet nuclear weapons and the implementation of disarmament treaties, the NATO bloc cannot resolve them alone. That is why the defense ministers agreed to the U.S. proposal to hold a meeting with the former Warsaw Pact defense ministers. A joint session, as it were, on the lines of the meeting scheduled for the NATO and former Warsaw Pact foreign ministers is in conformity with the decisions adopted by the North Atlantic bloc meeting in Rome. At the same time the NATO defense ministers recommend establishing closer contacts with the republics of the former Union.

The date of the defense ministers' joint meeting has not yet been clarified. It is being said only that it should be held as soon as possible. The joint session involving the NATO foreign ministers and their East European counterparts is scheduled for 20 December in Brussels. E. Shevardnadze and the ministers of other former Warsaw Pact states as well as the three Baltic countries are to take part in it.

Chemical Weapons Supply Stockpiled in Russia

LD1612133691 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 2213 GMT 11 Dec 91

[From the "Military News" section]

[Text] The entire chemical weapons supply—around 40,000 tons of combat poisoning agents—is stockpiled in Russia's territory. The spokesman of the chemical troops' command does not rule out a possibility that under the present political conditions Russia will have to shoulder all the expenses of doing away with chemical weapons. In late-November at a working conference the chairpersons of committees and commissions of the Russian parliament were introduced to the program of destroying chemical weapons that the USSR had failed to implement. To date there is no information whether any specific decisions on the destiny of chemical weapons have been taken. The deputy chief of chemical troops of the USSR Defense Ministry Major-General Igor Yevstafiev maintains: Destruction of the Soviet chemical weapons' supply is a purely political action unconnected with any technical reasons. The Soviet Union discontinued their manufacture in 1987 and

annually expended rbs [rubles] 12-16m [million] to store them. In such a way, the technical necessity of destroying the Soviet chemical potential could arise in 30-40 years' time only. Experts estimate that rbs 5.4bn [billion] and US [dollars] 146m were needed early this year to implement the program of chemical weapons' destruction. In 1992 rbs 28bn might be needed to meet those goals because of inflation. Hard currency expenditure shall remain constant.

Officer Discusses Chemical Weapons Destruction

PM1612104791 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 13 Dec 91 First Edition p 3

[Unattributed report on interview with Major General I. Yevstafyev, professor, doctor of technical sciences, and deputy chief of the USSR Defense Ministry Chemical Troops; place and date not given: "Will We Destroy the Chemical Weapons?"—first paragraph is editorial introduction]

[Text] Exactly one year remains until the date when we should start destroying our chemical arsenal under the appropriate Soviet-U.S. treaty. That treaty has not yet been ratified. But the problem of destroying chemical weapons will nevertheless face us in all its magnitude in the very near future. Are we ready to tackle this problem? Major General I. Yevstafyev, professor, doctor of technical sciences, and deputy chief of the USSR Defense Ministry Chemical Troops, discusses this with our correspondent.

No Matter How Costly, It Will Be Necessary To Destroy....

[Yevstafyev] Two Soviet-U.S. documents have been signed in the sphere of chemical weapons. The first is the Wyoming memorandum, which envisages a whole series of steps in the sphere of reciprocal information about the sides' chemical weapons, particularly weapons stocks. Such an exchange was carried out in 1990. We declared the quantity of toxic chemical agents in our possession and gave full details about where they are stored and produced and the makeup of our chemical weapons in terms of types. The United States naturally did the same. Under the memorandum, reciprocal visits have been made to chemical weapons storage and production facilities. Moreover, Soviet and U.S. experts have visited chemical weapons destruction facilities.

On 1 June 1990 the USSR and U.S. Presidents signed an agreement envisaging resolute steps in the sphere of reducing the sides' chemical warfare potential. The USSR has 40,000 tonnes of toxic chemical agents, the United States 30,000 tonnes. Under the agreement both sides are committed to having no more than 5,000 tonnes of chemical agents each by the year 2002. This agreement has not yet been ratified.

But there is another factor which should not be forgotten. The multilateral disarmament conference in Geneva, as part of which talks on chemical disarmament are being held, is continuing its work. And whereas three-four years ago the possibility of elaborating an all-embracing convention not only banning the combat use, development, production, and stockpiling of toxic chemical agents, but also envisaging their mandatory destruction, would have seemed unrealistic, today its elaboration is making resolute progress.

According to expert assessments, the text of the convention could be elaborated in 1992. For it to come into force, the convention has to be ratified by 60 states. This could take two years. So its entry into force toward the end of 1994 is altogether probable. And this means that, one year on, the countries party to the convention should start the process of destroying chemical weapons.

But the question as to whether technical reasons are prompting us to destroy chemical weapons is a perfectly natural one. I would like to make things utterly clear here. The United States stopped producing them in 1967 and resumed doing so only in 1987, making a small quantity of binary chemical weapons. But they are not the significant thing here. That is to say, U.S. chemical weapons have been stored for at least 24 years. There is a second factor too. They differ from ours in design terms. The Americans have made more extensive use of light alloys in their types. They have somewhat different requirements regarding the soundness of the casing. This is fine from the standpoint of their effectiveness. However, U.S. chemical weapons are now in a such a state that the problem of destroying them is a pressing one. And 30-year-old weapons are hardly weapons any more. There are no more delivery vehicles. A bomb, after all, is developed for a specific type of aircraft, and a shell for a specific artillery system.

The Soviet Union wound up chemical weapons production in 1987. We have virtually no problems regarding storage safety. Some 12-16 million rubles [R] are required each year for the storage of toxic agents. This outlay does not bear comparison with outlay on destruction. And we can store chemical weapons at least 30-40 years.

What, Then, Has Really Been Done?

In the second half of 1990 the USSR Defense Ministry began showing serious concern over the actual state of affairs and the technical basis for the fulfillment of this agreement. Chemical weapons are kept at ministry depots and bases and the ministry bears, if not legal, then at least moral responsibility for fulfillment of the agreement. No one in our country bears legal responsibility for the destruction of chemical weapons....

At the start of last year the USSR Council of Ministers made the decision to convert the installation in Chapayevsk, the only one in our country designed to develop chemical weapons destruction techniques. We have thus been deprived of a facility and therefore been unable to verify chemical weapons destruction techniques on an industrial scale. Given this, in March 1991 the USSR president ordered the Defense Ministry to finalize

within two months the chemicals weapons destruction program, which had earlier been examined in USSR Supreme Soviet committees and commissions, and submit it to the Cabinet of Ministers. It was to examine it, draw up draft laws ensuring the implementation of the program, and appoint a state commission to determine the location of destruction facilities.

On 10 May the redrafted program was submitted to the USSR Cabinet of Ministers, where virtually no one has taken it up. It has to be bluntly said that the president's instruction has not been executed, nor have laws regulating chemical weapons destruction been drafted. Such laws do exist in the United States. They define who is responsible for the destruction of military toxic agents, who finances the program, how it relates to the country's security, and so forth.

A new spiral in the development of this problem has been observable as this year approaches its end. But no longer at the disintegrating Union level, but at the Russian level. Even earlier, deputies representing Russia and individual Russian officials were present during various discussions of programs and attended international conferences. We saw their interest, but saw no solutions. Then in November the first substantive briefing of Russian Supreme Soviet deputies on the chemical weapons destruction program took place. A report on the program was delivered on 27 November to a working conference in which deputies and chairmen of committees and commissions took part. This discussion could, it seems to me, lead to some practical steps.

We have for a long time now stated pretty clearly that the problem of chemical weapons, as distinct from the problems of other types of weapons of mass destruction, is a Russian problem. There are nuclear weapons on the territory of a few republics. Chemical weapons have been produced in Russia and they are also stored on its territory. It is difficult for me to say whether only Russia will destroy these weapons or whether the republics of the former Union will take part in this work. At best it can be said that the destruction will be paid for out of the Union budget, if it exists. But you can scarcely count on any other participation. And given this, it follows that the commission choosing the destruction locations must be Russian. The laws must be Russian. The institutions and enterprises receiving contracts to carry out the work must also be Russian.

Where, Then, Are the Facilities To Be Constructed?

The program envisages three possible options. The first is to convert existing chemical weapons production plants into destruction plants. What is the advantage? These are state-of-the-art plants in terms of equipment. They certainly need to be reorganized and modified. But the basis is there: sources of power, purification facilities, personnel, and the right mental attitude on the part of the workforce there.

The second option is to destroy the chemical weapons at their storage sites. But there are implications here: Virtually all the chemical weapons storage sites are close to major population centers. They were created at a time when no attention was paid to these aspects. Moreover, cities are constantly growing and getting closer to the storage sites. And in our estimation, the risk of creating facilities at the storage locations is considerable. It substantially exceeds the risk involved in transportation. In our estimation, transporting chemical weapons is less dangerous than transporting chlorine, 30,000-40,000 tonnes of which "chug" along our country's railroads each year.

The third option is to select regions in the country which are remote from cities, populated areas, and rivers, but close to railroads and power installations. We have carried out such work, and a whole series of such regions can be identified in the country. But here too we will come up against a psychological barrier.

How is this problem to be resolved? I think the only way is to pass laws which lay down compensation for people for psychological damage. We are talking about a system of insurance. Risk has to be paid for. And if someone knows that he will receive compensation on agreeing to the siting of a facility, his reaction could be different. For example, we have been following very carefully how this is done in the world. In France nuclear electric power stations are sited in regions which are considered unacceptable for such construction in our country because of their population density. But the people there do not protest against nuclear electric power stations. Or take Nevada, for example: Its inhabitants are proud of the test range there, because, on the one hand, they know that everything is done to ensure their safety, while, on the other hand, the test site provides employment in Nevada.

According to prices at the start of 1991, the destruction of chemical weapons required R5.397 billion and $146 million. Next year costs could rise to R28 billion. The sum will increase as time goes on as a result of the devaluation of the ruble.

But will we get anything out of the destruction of chemical weapons apart from cleansing our country of this lethal arsenal? Yes, the facilities set up to destroy chemical weapons can clearly be used to destroy toxic waste in 8-10 years' time after they have performed their tasks. We have more pesticides past their storage life in our country than we have chemical weapons.

Moreover we favor techniques which envisage destroying toxic agents by converting them into useful output for the national economy rather than incinerating them. For example, lewisite contains 20 percent arsenic. While the arsenic content at the deposit in Georgia, the sole deposit in our country, incidentally, is only 13 percent. By our estimates, R2.5 billion of the 5.4 billion earmarked for the destruction of chemical weapons could be recouped.

Worldwide Issues

Republics' Presence at ICO Summit Viewed

PM1312150391 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
11 Dec 91 Union Edition p 5

[V. Lashkul, V. Skosyrev report: "Iraq in Total Isolation"]

[Excerpt] The Islamic world intends to play an increasingly active role in determining the destiny of the Soviet republics of Central Asia and the Transcaucasus. That is the conclusion that foreign observers are coming to as they analyze the course of the Islamic Conference Organization [ICO] summit, which opened in Dakar 9 December.

In the absence of the majority of Arab states from the conference, the star of the show is Iranian President Hashemi-Rafsanjani. Taking advantage of the fact that his country's avowed enemy Saddam Husayn was pilloried in a special resolution on the Gulf war, Hashemi-Rafsanjani addressed the conference as the champion of Islamic rebirth and the drawing of Soviet territories into its orbit. "We welcome recent events in the Soviet Union and the trend toward independence shown by republics with a Muslim population," he stated. REUTER notes in this regard that Teheran initiated the proposal on accepting Azerbaijan into the ICO.

As we have already reported, the BBC has said that envoys of Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan have arrived in the Senegalese capital as members of the Iranian delegation and aboard the same plane. The Azerbaijani and Kazakh representatives with whom we have spoken did not corroborate this story.

A delegation from our republic headed by Shaykh ul-Islam Allakhshukyur Pasha-zade [name as transliterated], chairman of the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of the Transcaucasus, is taking part in the Dakar meeting. The delegation arrived in the Senegalese capital as the representative of an independent state, we were told by Azerbaijan's deputy permanent representative in Moscow.

Kazakh Deputy Foreign Minister Saylau Batyrshauly is taking part in the meeting for his republic. His mission is to attend the conference as an observer with no other brief or voting right, we were told by the Kazakh president's press service.

Be that as it may, Azerbaijan's admission into the ICO is a dramatic confirmation of the weakening of Moscow's influence on the Soviet Muslim states. In this regard the statement by the USSR External Relations Ministry spokesman welcoming Azerbaijan's entry into the ICO sounded unconvincing. In our view, such a statement sounds more like making the best of a bad job. [passage omitted]

Conference on Democratic Rule Opens in Moscow

LD1512042591 Moscow TASS in English
2122 GMT 14 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Aleksandr Krolikov]

[Text] Moscow December 14 TASS—Prominent economists and experts in the sphere of politics and law gathered today to attend an international conference, which will tackle problems of democratic rule in the East European countries living through the period of a crisis.

The main purpose of the conference is to transfer the experience of implementing radical economic reforms in crisis periods, accumulated by Western democracies, former U.S. Vice President Walter Mondale said at the opening of the conference. Any attempts to resolve these problems by means of establishing a dictatorial regime are doomed to failure. The establishment and consolidation of democratic values is the only way, he said.

Specialists from Russia, Germany, Britain, Poland, Hungary and other countries are taking part in the consultations, organised by the National Institute for International Affairs at the U.S. Democratic Party.

Participants in the conference will discuss problems dealing with law and political strategy, as well as the role of political parties.

Western Attitude to Events in Union Examined

PM1612131591 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
13 Dec 91 Union Edition pp 1, 5

[V. Mikheyev feature under the general heading: "Our Disorder, Their Headache. The West Believes the Idea of a Commonwealth Will Help Us Get Out of the Impasse"]

[Text] The news of the overnight disappearance of the USSR in the system of geopolitical coordinates gave rise to more confusion and alarm than exultation abroad. The possibility of speaking of the Soviet Union "in the past tense," as F. Mitterrand put it, has placed the sacramental question of "What next?" on the agenda. The disintegration of the state, the power crisis, and the loss of confidence, accompanied by the economic slump and its graphic manifestation in the form of empty store shelves—all this is capable of leading, to use the French president's words again, to "an outburst of the population's anger, which will make it practically impossible to run a country that has descended into anarchy."

In Brussels, NATO's Eurogroup at defense minister level admitted that the "threat from the East," embodied by the military-political alliance of the communist countries, has disappeared. But the concept of the risk to security and stability on the continent has emerged in its place, a risk that is taking diverse forms which are "hard to predict and prevent." An unpredictable development of events on the territory of the former socialist camp has replaced the unequivocal confrontation of two ideologies

and two blocs. Many people were able to hear the statement by CIA Director Robert Gates, who said: "For many years the United States dreamed of the collapse of the Soviet Union. Today this dream is turning into a nightmare."

'The President's Future Is Hanging by a Thread'

This comment from Britain's FINANCIAL TIMES is in line with dozens of serious predictions and cheap speculations concerning the redistribution of official power in the former USSR. Observers note the doubtful value of M. Gorbachev's proposal to submit the documents on the formation of a Commonwealth of Independent States, which were signed in Brest, for examination by the Congress of People's Deputies. This body, which fell to pieces of its own accord following the putsch, can scarcely count on even a modest stock of trust from the citizens. Any attempt to reanimate it is doomed to failure.

The harsh conclusion of the French newspaper LA CROIX L'EVENEMENT boils down to the fact that the USSR president "cannot adapt to his country's realities at all." The U.S. Congress is apparently reaching the same conclusion: W. Dickinson, a member of the House of Representatives, speaking to journalists following the closed hearings devoted to the Soviet Union in the Armed Services Committee, stated that "Gorbachev is evidently losing. He can either retire or play the part of a figurehead, since he has no real power...."

Reassessment of Values

The White House, which can take a large part of the credit for personifying the policy of perestroyka and glasnost in the USSR and creating M. Gorbachev's image as a politician of international class, cannot find it easy to change its bearings. However, the cardinal changes in our country have caused a change in emphasis in the U.S. Administration's approach. It appears that a dual tactic, based on the principle of "noninterference" and on direct dialogue with the republics, has been launched.

On the one hand, the U.S. Department of State deemed it inappropriate to give a legal assessment of the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States. Spokesperson M. Tutwiler stated: "It is more appropriate for the Soviet people to do this themselves.... It is for them to decide."

You get the impression that, in his speech at the hearings in the U.S. Congress House of Representatives Armed Services Committee, U.S Ambassador to Moscow R. Strauss said bluntly and without beating about the bush what the U.S. President had left unsaid. He expressed the hope that M. Gorbachev, who enjoys a well-earned reputation as an outstanding reformer, will preserve his position in the state in some way. In his opinion, Russian President B. Yeltsin will be able to achieve the ratification of the agreement on the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States. "As a result, President Yeltsin is essentially consolidating his position as compared with President Gorbachev. There is not the shadow of a doubt that President Yeltsin and his various ministers are the people we are going to deal with," R. Strauss stressed.

The opinion voiced by French Television's Fifth Program deserves some attention: Following the August putsch, G. Bush is banking on Boris Yeltsin, and he would like him to become the "new master" and take control of Soviet nuclear weapons. The U.S. Administration's decision to open a consulate in Minsk and this week's imminent visit by U.S. Secretary of State J. Baker, who intends to visit Minsk, Kiev, and Moscow, cannot be taken out of this context.

Whose Finger Is on the Nuclear Button

Statements by Soviet leaders in the past few days have not fully clarified this extremely important question. Russian Foreign Minister A. Kozyrev, whose words were interpreted to mean that although M. Gorbachev is exercising supreme control of the nuclear arsenal during the transitional period, he is nevertheless already sharing it with B. Yeltsin, was joined by Ukrainian President L. Kravchuk who believes in the likelihood of the creation of three "nuclear buttons." Russian First Vice Premier G. Burbulis's answers at a news conference in Moscow as to who is commander in chief ("We will resolve this question in the next few days") were also disquieting.

We must not forget that the fate of almost 30,000 Soviet nuclear warheads is our neighbors' paramount worry. It is not out of the question, in their opinion, that tactical nuclear weapons will fall into the hands of nationalistically inclined leaders or will be secretly sold to "Third World" states which are at times noted for their even greater unpredictability.

This will be the subject of discussion at a meeting between French President F. Mitterrand and G. Burbulis on 12 December. B. Yeltsin's envoy, who has arrived in France on a one-day visit, will also meet National Assembly Chairman L. Fabius, Minister-Delegate for European Affairs E. Guigou, and the country's former President V. Giscard d'Estaing. Local observers perceive this visit as Russia's desire to calm public opinion, showing that the nuclear button is now in reliable hands, our Paris correspondent Yuriy Kovalenko reports.

In this connection, news agencies have been extensively quoting the words of P. Deynekin, commander in chief of the Soviet Air Force, who said that "a madman on his own cannot take control of these weapons." Meanwhile, in Brussels, NATO leaders are examining the idea of giving assistance to the East European countries in two spheres—the conversion of the military industry and the introduction of civilian control over the military.

United States & Canada

Bush-Gorbachev Phone Call Reported

LD1412003191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 2355 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow, 14 Dec (TASS)—On the evening of 13 December, President G. Bush telephoned M.S. Gorbachev. Bush was interested in the situation in the country and appraisals. M.S. Gorbachev expounded his point of view of events and his concept for the resolution of the country's main tasks.

Gorbachev said he views his task as seeing that the processes take place in a nonconfrontational way, within a constitutional framework, and with the participation of representative bodies and the people themselves. With regard to the decisions connected with the agreement on the Commonwealth of Independent States, besides positive points, there remain many questions to clear up. Even the authors themselves are not yet clear about everything, particularly about what should be the mechanisms for implementing the agreement, for the operation of the Commonwealth, and for interaction among its participants. The presidents agreed to maintain regular contact and to exchange information and views as the development of the situation requires.

Nuclear Arms Discussed

LD1412012191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0048 GMT 14 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Igor Barsukov]

[Text] Washington, 14 Dec (TASS)—The White House has announced that on 13 December President George Bush, at his own initiative, held a telephone conversation with USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev. During their nearly 30-minute talk, they discussed the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Soviet economy, and how to ensure the safety of nuclear weapons. According to the White House announcement, President Gorbachev assured President Bush that Soviet nuclear weapons are under reliable control. The American leader stressed that the United States supports the democratic reforms taking place in the republics, and gave an assurance that the U.S. Administration is willing to provide humanitarian and technical aid.

Secretary of State Baker Visits Moscow

U.S. 'Will Not Interfere'

LD1312215491 Moscow TASS in English 1925 GMT 13 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Pavel Vanichkin]

[Text] Washington December 13 TASS—The United States will not interfere in internal political changes in the Soviet Union, still it is ready to provide assistance to the republics involved in democratic reforms, U.S. State Secretary James Baker said today after meeting President Bush at the White House.

Baker, to come to the Soviet Union on Saturday [14 December] at the President's request, said he will visit Moscow, Kiev, Minsk, Alma-Ata and Bishkek.

In his words, the major aim of the visit is to estimate urgent economic needs of the republics and discuss security of the Soviet nuclear arms.

The United States and other countries should help meet emergency humanitarian needs of Soviet people, he said. They should also help the Soviet Union to control and eliminate the military remains of the cold war.

Baker Trip Previewed

LD1412172391 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 1310 GMT 14 Dec 91

[Yuriy Solton commentary]

[Text] U.S. Secretary of State James Baker is to pay a visit to this country starting Sunday [15 December] on instructions of President Bush to study the situation here. Mr. Baker will have meetings with Presidents Gorbachev and Yeltsin. He will visit Kiev and Minsk, make trips to Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. Yuriy Solton has the following comment and this is what he writes:

Much will depend on Mr. Baker's impressions from his tour. Up until now Soviet-American relations, that have covered the road from confrontation to partnership in recent years, have exerted a considerable positive influence on world affairs. Today the United States, like all other countries, faces difficult questions. What is going to happen next? Who it has to deal with in the former USSR?

So far the United States is demonstrating a well-guarded and realistic approach. It has welcomed the changes in the USSR and described them as a promising democratic revolution. But it is in no hurry, at the same time, to make decisions. White House Spokesman Marlin Fitzwater declared that the United States continues to maintain contacts with President Gorbachev, President Yeltsin, and other republican presidents. In his opinion the Commonwealth formed by Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus is a legitimate formation. But there is still the center and the other republics and the United States will have contacts with all of them, Mr. Fitzwater added.

Prior to his trip to the Soviet Union the U.S. secretary of state declared that he had no intention to interfere in the changes taking place in the Soviet Union. Nor is he going to play the role of an onlooker. According to Mr. Baker, changes in the Soviet Union should go along positive and peaceful lines. I think there is hardly anyone who would object to this. Mr. Baker believes that otherwise the situation may develop similar to that in Yugoslavia, only involving nuclear weapons.

Measures proposed by Washington for the sake of avoiding this march of events are quite acceptable: to prevent the emergence of four nuclear powers instead of one, to retain joint, reliable, and responsible control over the Soviet Union's nuclear arsenal, not to let weapons of mass destruction and their technology spread beyond the Soviet Union's limits, and to avoid an internal arms race between the former Union republics.

I think Washington's corresponding warning will be quite useful, and there is another important thing: the American President's initiative to convene an international conference early in January in Washington on coordinating international efforts and rendering assistance to the Soviet Union. Leading industrialized countries of the West, Central and East European countries, and international financial organizations have been invited to take part in it. The aim of the conference is to draw up programs for helping the new formations emerging in the place of the former USSR in their painful transfer to market relations and their effort to deal with the crisis by peaceful means. This is a lofty goal and we have every reason to welcome it, concludes Yuriy Solton.

Departs, Brings Humanitarian Aid

LD1512050491 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0425 GMT 15 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Igor Barsukov]

[Text] Washington, Dec 15 (TASS)—U.S. Secretary of State James Baker departed on 14 December for his visit to the USSR, during which he will go to Moscow, Kiev, Minsk, Alma-Ata, and Bishkek. The secretary of state will meet with USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev, the leaders of Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus, who have announced the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States, and with the leaders of Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, who have announced their intention to accede to the Commonwealth.

Speaking at Andrews Air Force Base prior to his departure for Moscow, James Baker said that during his visit he intends to discuss the humanitarian requirements of the USSR, the problem of ensuring the safety of Soviet nuclear weapons, and relations between the republics, without interfering in the process of political and economic reform. The U.S. secretary of state commented that the administration is worried about Soviet nuclear weapons. However, both President Gorbachev and President Yeltsin have given assurances that nuclear weapons in the USSR are under reliable control. We are pleased to hear it and we have no reason for doubt, said James Baker.

A half hour before his departure, the secretary of state went aboard an American C-5A transport plane at Andrews containing a 70-tonne load of humanitarian aid destined for Russia, Belarus, and Armenia. It consists of medical equipment and medicine, blankets, and clothing that the U.S. Government, companies, and private organizations are sending to these republics as a gift. The deliveries are being coordinated by the private group "Project Hope." The American C5A and a Soviet AN-124 transport aircraft also loaded with medicine and medical equipment will leave Washington for Moscow on 15 December. The total value of the two aircraft's cargo is put at 6 million dollars. James Baker noted the unique nature of the humanitarian aid plan for the Soviets, begun at the initiative of President George Bush and involving U.S. Government organizations and the private sector. The secretary of state also noted that American military transport aircraft are being used to carry the loads.

Viktor Komplektov, USSR ambassador to the United States, who spoke next, expressed profound gratitude to the leadership of the U.S. Administration and to the hundreds of Americans selflessly helping the peoples of the USSR to live through a time of great difficulty.

Baker Arrives, Agenda Detailed

LD1512132291 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1300 GMT 15 Dec 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondents Andrey Surzhanskiy and Georgiy Shmelev]

[Text] Moscow, 15 Dec (TASS)—U.S. Secretary of State James Baker arrived on a working visit to Moscow today.

According to the official version, the aim of his visit is to clarify the situation that has taken shape in the USSR since an agreement on the Commonwealth of Independent States was signed by the leaders of Russia, the Ukraine, and Belarus in December.

The schedule of working meetings indicates that the secretary of state will hold his first meeting with Andrey Kozyrev, head of the RSFSR's foreign department. It is expected that talks between James Baker and USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev and Russian President Boris Yeltsin, as well as USSR Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and USSR Defense Minister Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov, will be held on 16 December.

Meetings between J. Baker and the leaders of the Ukraine, Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan are planned.

Control over nuclear arms on USSR territory is believed to be the key issue on the agenda. Participants in the Brest agreement earlier spoke in favor of centralized control over nuclear weapons and the observation of international obligations on this issue.

Gorbachev, Baker Issue Statements

LD1612151891 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak 1410 GMT 16 Dec 91

[Correspondent Andrey Ptashnikov telephone report from Kremlin]

[Text] As you know, talks are being held at this moment between USSR President Gorbachev and U.S. Secretary of State Baker. They began, well, a little over an hour ago and have, as you can see, they have not yet ended.

Before the talks began, Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev and James Baker made very brief statements. And since they were both short and brief, I will attempt to summarize them. President Gorbachev stated that at the present moment the country, that is the former Soviet Union, is going through a historic stage of transition to a new stage in its development and both Union structures and the new formations are taking part in this process. This period is one of extreme responsibility but, as Comrade Gorbachev stressed, this is a responsibility which is borne not only by the peoples of the Soviet Union, but also by our partners, including the United States. They bear responsibility because the consequences of the changes that are taking place in the former Soviet Union go beyond the limits of one state. [Moscow TASS International Service in Russian in a similar report at 1430 GMT on 16 December adds the following: "Replying to a question put by journalists on the problem of control over nuclear weapons in the USSR, the president stressed that 'such control over nuclear weapons does exist and there is no reason to show any kind of concern over this issue'. He added that there is complete agreement with the republics that have such weapons at their disposal."]

For his part, James Baker noted that the United States realizes the importance of the changes taking place in the USSR and also the extent of its own share of responsibility. At the same time, he stressed that all the radical changes that have been taking place in recent years both within our country and beyond it, are connected, above all, with the name of Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev. Such were the two brief statements prior to the start of the talks. Let me say once again that they are continuing.

The plan was for there to be a small impromptu news conference after the completion of the talks, but as we have just been told in all probability there will be no such news conference. So, immediately after the talks with Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev, U.S. Secretary of State Baker will depart for the USSR Defense Ministry where he will have a meeting with USSR Defense Minister Shaposhnikov. And his meeting with USSR Minister of External Affairs Shevardnadze and a brief joint news conference are planned for the end of the day.

China

PRC 'Concerned' With Developments in Union

PM1212164391 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 13 Dec 91 Union Edition p 5

[Correspondent Yu. Savenkov report: "China Also Concerned By Situation in Former Union"]

[Text] Beijing—"As a neighboring country, China is naturally concerned by the development of the situation in the USSR and hopes that all interested parties will soon stabilize the situation there through consultations." That was how a PRC Foreign Ministry spokesman formulated Beijing's official stance on events in our country. China's relations with the Soviet Union (Beijing never says "former" Union) and the republics must develop on the basis of the spirit and letter of the two joint Sino-Soviet communiques. The spokesman reaffirmed China's desire to develop friendly relations and cooperation with Russia, the Ukraine, and Belarus, admittedly without voicing the official attitude to the tripartite alliance of Slavic states.

Has China posted additional security forces to the Sino-Soviet border region? The spokesman did not confirm or deny reports on this circulating in the Hong Kong press. He merely said: "The border is stable now."

According to Hong Kong press reports, Beijing has posted additional troops to major cities and border areas in the Xinjiang-Uygur Autonomous Region. THE SOUTH CHINA MORNING POST also said that Beijing has sent an urgent letter warning of a possible swelling of nationalist sentiments and centrifugal forces threatening the country's unity. Separatists in Xinjiang may exploit the independence movement and the collapse of the Union, deciding that perhaps their hour has come too. This autonomous region in the extreme west of China is populated by approximately 6 million Uigur and Kazakhs, many of whom have relatives in Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenia.

Foreign Ministry Spokesman Cited

LD1212182791 Moscow TASS in English 1509 GMT 12 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Vladimir Oreshin and Vladimir Fedoruk]

[Text] Beijing December 12 TASS—China will build its relations with the Soviet Union and all the republics, including Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan, on the basis of principles envisaged by the joint Sino-Soviet communiques of 1989 and 1991, said Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Duan Jin.

The development of friendship and cooperation with them not only responds to the interests of peoples of both countries, but also contributes to the consolidation of peace and stability in Asia and throughout the world.

Speaking at a briefing for Chinese and foreign correspondents, Duan Jin stressed China is attentively watching current Soviet developments. Channels for mutual contacts are open, he said.

China hopes the situation in the Soviet Union will soon stabilize with the help of mutual consultations between the interested sides.

The spokesman expressed the hope the Soviet Union will act properly as far as the control over the Soviet nuclear arms is concerned.

Duan Jin described the situation on the Sino-Soviet border as stable.

Asked about the possibility to establish diplomatic relations between Taiwan and Ukraine, the Chinese spokesman noted China expects Ukraine to abide by international obligations envisaged by the joint Sino-Soviet communiques. He confirmed the Chinese Government's stand that Taiwan is an inseparable part of China.

Border Troop Reports 'Refuted'

LD1212222491 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 2000 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Text] The Chinese Ministry of Foreign affairs has refuted reports that additional troops are being urgently gathered in the Soviet-Chinese border region.

Rogachev, PRC Envoy on Soviet-Chinese Ties

OW1512053391 Moscow Radio Moscow in Mandarin 1000 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Text] We have reported that the Soviet Institute of Foreign Affairs recently held a seminar in Moscow to discuss Soviet-Chinese relations. Many well-known Soviet diplomats and Sinologists attended the seminar. Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Rogachev and (Zhang Zhen), Chinese charge d'affaires ad interim to the Soviet Union, spoke at the seminar. The following are the contents of their speeches:

Rogachev said: Both Russian-Chinese and Soviet-Chinese relations have always been the most important to us. China is a great power with vast territory. It plays a decisive role in world affairs; there is no doubt about its prestige. He stressed: China has always occupied a special position in our international relations. Maintaining good relations with China is the primary task of Soviet foreign policy; it is our most important security foundation in the East. He said: Current Soviet-Chinese relations are based on the common practice in international relations—the principle of equality, mutual benefits, and mutual noninterference in each other's internal affairs. This principle is laid down in the 1989 Soviet-Chinese communique and was further expounded in the communique on the second Soviet-Chinese summit in 1991. Bilateral relations between the two countries have developed steadily since relations were completely normalized two years ago. Contacts in various fields and at various levels between the two sides have developed substantially and gradually into constructive cooperation.

In speaking on the above issues, Rogachev quoted a series of [words indistinct]. He spoke of the two countries' (?mutual support) in the international arena, the two sides' efforts to reduce military strengths in border areas, and the two sides' cooperation in addressing border problems. He said: It is natural that some problems have cropped up in the relations between the two countries. One of these problems is that economic cooperation between the two countries is far from having reached the scale that can be reached between the two countries. The main reason for this is the current crisis in the Soviet Union. However, both the Soviet Union and China know that cooperation between the two countries has bright prospects, and both sides are working to prevent these prospects from disappearing. Another problem is about Taiwan. Regarding relations with Taiwan, not all Soviet republics and local authorities have exercised political restraint. We hope to straighten out this problem by addressing domestic problems and holding regular consultations with China.

In closing, Rogachev said: Given the complicated situation during the current transitional period in the Soviet Union, we realize that one of our important tasks is not to go backward. Instead, we should preserve and strengthen the positive factors created by the normalization of relations between the two countries. We very much appreciate China's understanding of our current acute problems. We regard this as an evidence of our having established neighborly relations and a high degree of mutual trust with our neighbor in recent years.

(Zhang Zhen) delivered a speech at the seminar after Rogachev. He stressed that China respects and will develop the results of the normalization of relations achieved by the leaders of the two countries at a meeting in Beijing two and one-half years ago. In replying to a Soviet diplomat's question on China's attitude toward changes in (?former Soviet territories), he said:

[Begin (Zhang Zhen) recording] Based on the five principles of peaceful coexistence, we are (?willing) to continue to maintain relations with (?a union of any form) in the future. And, we are also willing to (?firmly) develop relations with members of such a union—sovereign Soviet states. We attach special importance to developing relations with the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, our close neighbor. We also will develop neighborly and friendly relations with our close neighbors in central Asia, such as Kazahkstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikstan. [end recording]

Northeast Asia

Japan Hopes For Soviet Security Council Seat

LD1612104291 Moscow TASS in English 0849 GMT 16 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Vasiliy Golovnin]

[Text] Tokyo December 16 TASS—The unexpectedly fast collapse of the Soviet Union has stirred up old hopes in Japan of taking a seat in the U.N. Security Council after the Soviet Union ceases to exist as a single state.

Japanese Foreign Minister Michio Watanabe told the Japanese parliament last week, his government will continue efforts to obtain a seat in the U.N. Security Council, which will allow it to use the right of veto on key international issues, the Japanese newspaper ASAHI said.

The Japanese Foreign Ministry is now developing several scenarios. According to one of them, the Soviet Union's seat in the U.N. Security Council will pass to "some central organisation" created by 12 former Soviet republics.

The ministry said, however, it is not clear whether the newly formed commonwealth will have the necessary features of the state ensuring it a seat in the United Nations and the Security Council.

Another possibility being discussed by the Japanese Foreign Ministry, is that the Soviet Union's place will be occupied by the Russian Republic, the biggest of the former Soviet republics and the largest in terms of nuclear weapons.

Japan, the world's second economic power, said it has more right to the seat than Russia, which is facing further disintegration.

Supreme Soviet Delegation Departs Japan

LD1312120591 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0855 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Text] Tokyo, 9 Dec (TASS)—A delegation of the USSR Supreme Soviet, headed by Vladimir Adylov, deputy chairman of the Soviet of the Union, which was here at the invitation of the Japanese parliament, left today for Moscow.

During their seven-day visit, the deputies representing Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan acquainted themselves with the work of the supreme legislative body of Japan, with its chamber and its permanent commissions and apparatus.

Members of the delegation were received by Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa and Foreign Minister Michio Watanabe.

During its stay in Japan, the delegation visited the cities of Osaka and Kyoto.

South Korea Suspends Credits for 1 Year

LD1312152591 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 1300 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Text] The Government of South Korea intends to provide the USSR with economic aid until the end of this year in accordance with the previously drawn plans; however, it has suspended the implementation of its obligations on the credits for next year until the situation in the Soviet Union becomes more stable. YONHAP NEWS AGENCY reports that this was declared by ROK Foreign Minister Yi Sang-ok.

DPRK-ROK Agreement on Cooperation Analyzed

SK1412100091 Moscow Radio Moscow in Korean 1330 GMT 13 Dec 91

[From the "World Today" program]

[Text] The fifth round of prime ministerial talks held in Seoul between the DPRK and the ROK came to an end.

In his analysis of the talks' outcome, station commentator Aleksey Kondrachev writes the following:

Judging from all the facts, the confrontation between the two Korean sides, the source of the global village's longest regional tension, appears to have begun to diminish steadily.

For the first time since 1945 when the country was divided, prime ministers of the North and South have signed in Seoul an agreement on reconciliation, nonaggression, and exchange and cooperation.

This document has formally brought an end to the state of war that has continued between the two Korean states since 1950.

The road of bringing about peace on the Korean peninsula has been a long and treacherous one replete with many tragic incidents.

For this reason, the agreement reached this time around in Seoul has stirred up a sense of satisfaction and (?respect).

A political situation, quite new in terms of quality, is now prevailing on the Korean peninsula. It has opened the door to a transition from confrontation between the two Korean states to detente and promises a road leading to exchange and cooperation.

This will cement the stability on the Korean peninsula.

The portion of the agreement in which Pyongyang and Seoul stated that they recognize and respect the two different systems already in place, that they will end mutual slander and vilification, that the two sides will not interfere in each other's internal affairs draws special attention.

The two states bear the duty not to use armed forces against each other and resolve all manner of disputes through dialogue. Not only have the two sides envisioned diversified economic cooperation, but they have also agreed on contacts between the people and their free movements.

This, too, is important as it is an indication that the South and North have agreed on strengthening their mutual confidence. By developing confidence and cooperation, the Korean people can achieve national reunification, their longstanding desire.

Following the agreement's signing ceremony, ROK President No Tae-u proposed a meeting with DPRK President Kim Il-song for the discussion of issues related to the reunification of Korea.

Another important question arises at this juncture, the issue of turning the Korean peninsula into a nuclear-free zone. The possibility of embodying the proposal keeps rising.

The two Korean states call for converting the peninsula into a nuclear-free zone.

According to certain sources, the United States has withdrawn its nuclear weapons from the peninsula. Seoul has placed the areas where those nuclear weapons had been deployed under inspection of the international supervision teams.

I am convinced that Pyongyang, too, will agree to international inspection of its nuclear research center when it is confirmed that the U.S. nuclear weapons have been withdrawn.

When the Seoul agreement is implemented, the Korean people will come to have a real possibility of living, once again, together in a single fatherland.

Near East & South Asia

Diplomat Cited on Change in UN Voting Policy

LD1612164291 Moscow Radio Moscow in Arabic 1500 GMT 16 Dec 91

[Text] The media have recently begun to carry reports alleging that the USSR has changed its position on most of the resolutions that deal with the various aspects of the Palestine question, citing in this regard the result of the voting on these resolutions during the 46th plenary session of the UN General Assembly on 9 December.

What drew the attention of our delegates during the session was the two large packages of resolutions which the United Nations traditionally adopts every year and the fact that a large part of these resolutions was adopted by an overwhelming majority of votes, just as in past years.

In the past, the USSR was always among those who voted positively in regard to these resolutions. Last December, for example, the USSR supported all 16 resolutions that were put to the vote. But this time, the USSR voted positively in respect of only 5 resolutions and abstained from voting in respect of the remaining 11 resolutions.

Our correspondent Andrey Khlebnikov asked Gennadiy Khatilov, head of the Soviet International Organizations Administration at the Ministry of External Relations, to clarify the position of the USSR in this matter. He said:

[Khatilov in Russian fading into Arabic translation] In voting on this traditional group of resolutions on the Middle East, our position stemmed from the premise that the submission of these resolutions in the form used at past sessions of the UN General Assembly was incompatible with the spirit of the time. Furthermore, our position stemmed from the premise that it would be possible to refrain from adopting resolutions affecting the core of the Mideast settlement at the current session of the UN General Assembly.

But while refraining from doing so, we must take the new important developments into consideration, thereby making it possible for the parties concerned with the conflict as well as the entire international community to discuss in the coming year, for example, how the Mideast settlement is proceeding and what are the practical results that will emanate from the second phase of the peace process.

The Soviet diplomat added: Our position does not mean in any way whatsoever that we have abandoned the principled evaluations and the stands established by the past resolutions of the UN General Assembly and the UN Security Council, particularly in regard to the denunciation of aggression, the seizure of the lands of others by force, and the violation of human rights and even of entire peoples in addition to other principled issues.

Stemming from this particular position, the Soviet delegation abstained this year from voting on a large number of resolutions that deal with the activities of the UNRWA [United Nations Relief and Works Agency] and the group of resolutions that pertain to Israel's actions in the occupied territories, and so on so forth.

If we take for example, the activities of the UNRWA, our position did not stem from any change in our attitude toward the humanitarian aspects of this Agency's activities. On the contrary, the USSR always calls for increasing UNRWA's humanitarian activities, regarding it an important and indivisible part of UN actions to find a just solution to the Palestine question. This was clearly evident in the speech by the Soviet delegate at the UN General Assembly.

In conclusion, the Soviet diplomat said:

[Khatilov in Russian fading into Arabic translation] Our position stems from one premise only, namely, that in

the conditions of the start of work for a Mideast settlement, these resolutions should not touch on matters affecting the core of the settlement, which constitute matters for discussion by the peace conference.

Many of the delegations have upheld this view during the current session of the UN General Assembly.

East Europe

Bulgarian Envoy on Commonwealth Membership

OW1412084091 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1543 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] "It can't be ruled out that the Commonwealth of Independent States may include not only republics of the former Union, but also some East-European countries", journalists were told Dec 12 by the Russian President's press-secretary Pavel Voshchanov. He hinted at one of the Balkan nations.

To clarify the situation our DP [Diplomatic Panorama] correspondent approached Bulgaria's embassy in Moscow. A high ranking official at the embassy stressed that his country had set its foreign policy priorities clearly enough. "Bulgaria links its further development with a new united Europe and its emerging institutions", he said.

As to fraternal ties between Bulgaria and former Union republics, Russia in the first place, Sofia finds it necessary to continue developing them. "We are for dialogue and cooperation with the Commonwealth, whoever joins it", stated the diplomat.

Asked about russophobia in Bulgaria, he replied, "I don't think we can talk of any increase of anti-Russian or anti-Soviet feeling in Bulgaia". At the same time he admitted that with pluralism of opinions and freedom of the press, some Bulgarian mass media "will express their particular views of Russia or what's been happening since the Second World War". Those media are few, he reassured, and not reflecting the predominant mood in Bulgaria with respect to Russia and the former Soviet Union.

The diplomat expressed confidence that the idea of the new Commonwealth has nothing to do with panslavism. It rather follows from the present situation on the vast territory of the former USSR. "It's important to all European countries including Bulgaria that the process of its transformation should proceed peacefully and without conflicts", he noted.

'Wild' Sale of Army Housing Criticized

PM1612101591 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 13 Dec 91 First Edition p 3

[Report under "BELYY [White] TASS" rubric: "Military Business"]

[Text] Jerzy Figurski, the Lignica voivode's representative for ties with foreign countries, has accused Soviet servicemen of "breaking Polish housing laws."

Figurski alleges that in Lignica Voivodship, where the Soviet Group of Forces is located, "the Russians illegally sold 300 Poles housing at facilities recorded as barracks complexes for large amounts of money." These premises, according to him, are in a terrible state.

Lignica is currently short of at least 3,500 apartments for Polish citizens. The buildings occupied by Soviet military units total around 2,000 apartments. The "wild" clearance sale of housing is clouding the talks on the handover to the Polish side of property being left behind by the Soviet Group of Forces units that are being withdrawn from Poland. But meanwhile people from all over the country are going to Lignica and entering into secret deals with the unit commanders.

West Europe

Gorbachev, Mitterrand Discuss Issues by Phone

LD1412211491 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1910 GMT 14 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow, 14 Dec (TASS)—It has been officially stated that a telephone conversation took place today between USSR President M.S. Gorbachev and French President Mitterrand by mutual agreement.

M.S. Gorbachev greeted F. Mitterrand as an old friend and eminent statesman, heading a country friendly to the Soviet Union. M.S. Gorbachev remarked that the world is fortunate that a stage of fundamental and dramatic changes in world politics there are figures in the leading echelons of the stature and quality of the French president, capable of assisting the constructive resolution of the most difficult international contradictions and problems and the transfer of east-west relations between East and West to a fundamentally new quality.

At F. Mitterrand's request, the USSR president informed him of the process of forming new aspects of statehood in the Soviet Union connected with the initiative put forward by the leaders of Russia, the Ukraine, and Belarus. In our society an extensive discussion developed around this initiative, in which parliaments of the sovereign states, the public, and politicians of various tendencies took part. President Gorbachev sees it as his task to ensure that the process of elaborating and seeking forms for the new statehood of the former Soviet Union develops within a constitutional and democratic framework and on the basis of the maintenance of

stability in society and the strict observance by all the Soviet Union's future legal successors of the very important international obligations connected with the position of a great world power.

M.S. Gorbachev voiced a number of considerations regarding the forms in which constructive aid to the peoples in our country on the part of the world community and, in particular, of West European partners of the Soviet Union could be provided at this important and dramatic stage of radical changes. He particularly dwelt on support of the process of transferring the economy to market relations and also touched upon the problem of the settlement of all issues of the international legal succession to the Soviet Union, taking into consideration the need to preserve its states as a unified and consolidated buttress of a new democratic world order.

For his part, Francois Mitterrand voiced understanding of the position of President Gorbachev and declared active support for his efforts, aimed at stimulating fundamental transformations in our country, taking into account the observance of their democratic nature. He confirmed that he considers that all aspects of the French standpoint with regard to the peoples of the Soviet Union which he expressed to President Gorbachev during their recent meeting in France remain in force.

President Mitterrand said that France sees the efforts of President Gorbachev as an important and fruitful factor, ensuring the necessary and stable development of democratic processes in the Soviet Union and in its relations with the rest of the world.

The two presidents agreed to maintain regular contacts in the future, taking into account the rapid development of the political situation in the Soviet Union.

Gorbachev Meets UK Foreign Affairs Officers

LD1312213491 Moscow TASS in English 1913 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow December 13 TASS—USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev today received in the Kremlin British Foreign Office envoy Leonard Vincent Appleyard and British Ambassador to the USSR Rodric Braithwaite.

They had a substantive conversation about the situation in the country and processes connected with the forming of the Commonwealth of Independent States. Questions of aid to the USSR in the framework of the decisions of the London meeting of the Group of Seven and subsequent decisions were also touched upon.

Shevardnadze Meets UK Officer

LD1312184891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1336 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow, 13 Dec (TASS)—Today Eduard Shevardnadze, USSR minister of external relations, received L. Appleyard, political director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Great Britain, who is in Moscow as a special representative of the British Government. A detailed and frank conversation took place on the development of the political and socio-economic situation in the Soviet Union, and on the problems of transforming Soviet statehood.

Expressing the common viewpoint of the Western governments, the British representative voiced great concern as to how control over nuclear weapons on the territory of the republics will continue to be implemented. It was particularly stressed that the West expects decisions from the new republican authorities which fully take into account the USSR's obligations in the sphere of disarmament, including nuclear disarmament, and in the sphere of human rights, credit, and finance. The two sides noted the need to act with all the means at their disposal to see that the internal processes in the country are taken into account and are coordinated with the tasks of ensuring stability and predictability in European and world affairs. During the conversation economic cooperation and humanitarian aid to the sovereign republics in the present difficult transitional period were touched upon.

Interior Minister Barannikov Visits Austria

92UF0291A Moscow RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA in Russian 4 Dec 91 p 3

[Correspondent Aleksandr Burdanov report: "Ministers of the Interior, Unite!"]

[Text] Vienna—Organized crime knows no international boundaries, it unites in interregional transnational groupings and disrupts domestic political and social stability even in countries with a felicitous situation when it comes to the origins of crime. And what can be said about our country? There has in recent years been a widening and strengthening of the relations of the mafia structures of major cities of the Soviet Union with interested "partners" in Western countries.

Concern to establish permanent contacts with his Western partners brought Minister V. Barannikov to Vienna. In the course of the Soviet minister's visit to Austria, he held talks with Interior Minister Franz Loeschnak, and a protocol on cooperation was signed. Our delegation familiarized itself with the activity of the Cobra special Austrian gendarmerie subdivision for combating terrorism and visited the national central office of the Interpol crime investigation international police organization in Austria.

Austria has scored many successes in the fight against terrorism thanks to the actions of Cobra, on whose banner is written: "Terrorism Has No Chance." This organization cooperates closely with the subdivisions for combating terrorism from other countries. Specialists from Italy, the FRG, Belgium, the United States, China, Hungary, and Saudi Arabia attend Cobra courses on a

mutual exchange basis. Four sturdy boys from the USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs have been undergoing training here this year.

Summing up the results of the negotiations in Vienna, V. Barannikov and F. Loeschnak noted at a news conference the need for a stimulation and extension of cooperation primarily in such areas as the curbing of organized crime, the fight against drug trafficking and economic crimes, and problems of migration. The Soviet minister reassured local journalists worried about the possibility of a sharp influx into Austria next year of citizens from our country. In his estimation, the total number of those leaving the Union for permanent residence overseas, on official business, and on tourist trips would decline to the previous level and would hardly be in excess, as a whole, of 10 million persons a year.

Reality, as V. Barannikov emphasized, is compelling the interior ministers of all countries to unite in the fight against crime and, most importantly, to combine efforts in specific cases.

Paper Comments on Suspension of EC Aid

PM1312125191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 12 Dec 91 Union Edition p 4

[E. Guseynov article: "West Seeks Ways to Aid Former USSR, While CIA Predicts Return of Authoritarian Regime"]

[Text] "All this will be handed over as a gift. Although we do not yet know from where the necessary funds will be taken"—that was the EC Commission press secretary's comment on the decision adopted by the EC in Maastricht 10 December to allocate $340 million to inhabitants of the former USSR in the form of emergency food aid.

The aid will go mainly to the population of the two largest cities in Russia—Moscow and St. Petersburg. It will be sent directly to these cities, bypassing the central organs both of the disintegrated Union and of Russia. The funds will be allocated in addition to the credits already guaranteed by the EC to the value of $2.15 billion, which are also earmarked for food purchases. And this week the EC finance ministers will determine the sources for funding the aid.

News agencies emphasize that the German delegation and Chancellor H. Kohl personally were the most insistent in seeking the adoption of the decision on additional aid. It was also the Germans who had the idea of using German experts in the sphere of railroad transport operations, as well as Bundeswehr soldiers dressed in civilian clothes, to distribute aid.

I will remind you that Bonn has issued state credit guarantees alone for exports to the Soviet Union to the value of $16 billion.

The problem of giving effective aid to the republics of the disintegrated USSR, and to Russia in particular, is also of concern to German experts because approximately 1.5 million tonnes of grain earmarked for dispatch to the Union is now stockpiled in German ports, from Hamburg to Rostock. But no one is shipping it, as the Soviet side is not in a position to pay for this freight. And yet the Germans consider it perfectly possible to transfer to Russia in 1992 at least 7-9 million of the 15 million tonnes of grain which Boris Yeltsin has requested from the EC leaders.

The recent events in the east of Europe, particularly the Minsk agreements, evidently convinced the EC leaders once and for all of the impossibility of reviving the Soviet Union. At any rate, this is demonstrated by the distinct change in the community's policy in the sphere of giving aid to the republics of the former USSR. In particular, the statement made in Maastricht by Belgian Finance Minister P. Maystadt is significant. He announced that the credit guarantees to the tune of $650 million, which were issued by the EC earlier and were earmarked for food purchases by the USSR Government, are being suspended. But these funds can be used for food deliveries to individual cities in our country that have the greatest need for emergency aid.

To all appearances, the EC decision reflects the policy of all developed Western countries—a policy that has been coordinated in recent days. At any rate, an official statement by a Japanese Foreign Ministry spokesman, disseminated 11 December, does not appear accidental. It concerns the $2.6 billion in aid which the Japanese Government had promised to give the USSR but was in no hurry to implement in practice. This time, to judge from a statement by Japanese officials, the land of the rising sun intends to accelerate as far as possible the allocation of the first $100 million promised as long ago as last year and also to resolve as quickly as possible the question of allocating credit guarantees worth a further $500 million for exports to the republics of the former USSR. At the same time the Japanese Foreign Ministry spokesman emphasized that aid will be sent directly to the most needy parts of our country as light is shed on the overall political situation.

It only remains to specify that this year alone the G-7 countries have allocated credits and aid to the value of $11 billion to the Soviet Union.

Thatcher Interviewed on Commonwealth Events

LD1412114891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1006 GMT 8 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Dmitriy Voskoboynikov]

[Text] London, 8 Dec (TASS)—Given that the inhabitants of the Ukraine, making use of their new democratic rights and freedoms, have voted for the independence of the republic, their wishes should not be opposed. This opinion was voiced in an interview with your TASS correspondent by Margaret Thatcher, former head of the

British Government. At the same time, she emphasized that "freedom demands responsibility" and the undertaking of obligations which were earlier taken on by the USSR, particularly as concerns observance of arms control treaties. "We signed agreements in the military sphere with the Soviet Union, and they must be respected," M. Thatcher stressed.

M. Thatcher cited the British Commonwealth as an example of a successful resolution of problems which have something in common with what is now happening in the USSR. Its formation was made possible because Great Britain did not oppose the wishes of its colonies to gain independence and "preserved friendship with them." "Unity cannot and should not be maintained by force," she said.

More and more politicians are now saying that the Western powers should lay the emphasis on development of relations with the leadership of the republics. What is M. Thatcher's view on this? She recalls that she met and had talks with Boris Yeltsin even before he was elected president of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic. She is unconditionally in favor of developing ties with the republics. "The essence of democracy lies in limiting the power of central government," says M. Thatcher. "The greater part of trading ties in a free society have nothing whatever to do with the government. It should not even be consulted."

"Gorbachev has given people the kind of rights which should never be given up," she stresses. As far as economic prosperity is concerned, it "is not granted by the dictate of governments, it is achieved through people themselves gradually becoming more enterprising." In M. Thatcher's view, for entrepreneurial skills to be developed, sensible laws allowing trade and industry to function normally are necessary, as is a strict approach to finances, private ownership, and privatization. "In a country where there is no right to ownership, there is no observation of human rights either," she stresses.

M. Thatcher is puzzled and alarmed by the collapse of the system of goods distribution in the USSR. "You produce a lot of food but a considerable part of it does not reach the market along normal trade channels," she says. "This is absolutely ridiculous." In her view, the West ought to be giving more aid to our country—both in getting the distribution system going properly and in the area of getting private capital as a whole off the ground. After WWII, the West helped Germany and Japan "in building democracy." Today, just such help, if not more generous, should be given to the Soviet Union. "In my opinion," M. Thatcher said, "we are not doing enough. Just 10 years ago we would have given everything for what has now happened in the Soviet Union."

'Neighborhood Treaty' With Finland Initialled

LD0912200491 Helsinki Suomen Yleisradio Network in Finnish 1300 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Text] According to Foreign Minister Paavo Vaeyrynen, Finland is prepared for the fact that the national life of the Soviet Union will be arranged on a completely new basis; it is negotiating with both the Soviet Union and Russia. The neighborhood treaty with the Soviet Union is ready, and it was initialled in Moscow earlier today. The aim is to continue negotiations with Russia next week. Vaeyrynen emphasizes that the continuation is dependent on when and how the new state structures will be implemented.

Vaeyrynen says in his statement that Finland regards it as positive that cooperation with republics which belonged to the Soviet Union continues. Finland assumes that these republics are fully responsible for the international agreements signed by the Soviet Union.

Congress of People's Deputies

Parties Unite Against Belovezhskaya Agreement

Russian Leaders Oppose Congress

PM1512154391 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 12 Dec 91 Union Edition p 1

[Report by parliamentary observer S. Chugayev: "Ryzhkov and Chebrikov Want Congress To Be Convened"]

[Text] On the 20th floor of the deputies' house on the New Arbat, which is well known in Moscow, signatures continued to be collected 10 December among supporters of convening a sixth, extraordinary Congress of USSR People's Deputies. By noon more than 200 people had signed the appeal. They include many people well known in our country. For example, USSR People's Deputies N. Ryzhkov and V. Chebrikov drove over to the building on the New Arbat specially for this. At a neighboring table in the same room where signatures are being collected, a statement by the political council of the "Civil Accord" group was being prepared. It supports the idea of convening the Congress and describes the statement by the heads of Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus as "an act of arbitrariness entailing insuperable contradictions." "Civil Accord" unites several dozen parties and movements, including the Liberal Democratic Party, the "All-Slav Assembly" party, the "Marxist Platform in the CPSU," and the monarchist party. According to G. Gusev, executive secretary of this association's Political Council, they reckon that the statement will elicit a broad response from the people and that the Belovezhskaya agreements will meet with a strong rebuff.

This is the opposition to the emergent union of independent states that is taking shape deep within the top representative organ of power in the USSR and under its auspices. It is not hard to explain the intellectual ferment in the Union parliament. The logic of the Belovezhskaya agreements inexorably attests that the new union has no need of the USSR Supreme Soviet's services. And it is not even because the deputies wasted almost a month forming committees, reforming the apparatus, and distributing salaries and offices and finished reorganizing themselves precisely on the eve of the meeting in Belarus. To judge from the latest session sittings and, particularly, from conversations in the lobby, very many Union parliamentarians had no illusions about the role they began to play in the country after the August putsch.

Being debarred from adopting any important decisions and being virtually excluded from politics—these trials are too hard for those who experienced the euphoria of the first congress. And now there comes this painful and seemingly final blow. It can be assumed that among those who advocate convening an extraordinary Congress there are many who hope thereby to designate at least in some way both their own status and that of parliament. After all, if it is necessary to leave, then this should be done in a worthy and, most importantly, lawful manner. The deputies evidently still deserve the right to have such a modest wish met.

Grounds for believing that these questions would receive the necessary explanation appeared after it was learned that Russian Vice Premier Gennadiy Burbulis and State Counselor Sergey Shakhray (these days they perform the role of a kind of "fire brigade" for B. Yeltsin, explaining, wherever possible, the essence of the Belarus accords) intended to meet with Union parliamentarians.

The meeting was held 10 December. The expected discussion did not happen. Maybe G. Burbulis and S. Shakhray, as well as those who were accompanying them—S. Filatov, first deputy chairman of the Russian parliament, and N. Ryabov, chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet Soviet of the Republic—were experiencing an acute lack of time. Maybe the fate of the Union parliament, among other questions (the fate of the USSR president, new principles for leadership of the Armed Forces), was left by the leaders of the three states "until a later date." Be that as it may, the guests were given a cool reception.

The purpose of the Russian leaders' visit had been designated right from the start—to warn the deputies against attempts to convene an extraordinary Congress. In the opinion of G. Burbulis, convening it will only provoke a confrontation in society, as well as the holding of a referendum, incidentally. Although the vice premier did not object categorically to a referendum. It was explained to the deputies that they can, in principle, meet and talk. Only such a meeting will not be considered a Congress. This is because, by decision of the Fifth Extraordinary Congress, all subsequent congresses have been revoked and, consequently, are anticonstitutional.

As regards the immediate future of the Union parliament, this question was constantly and delicately bypassed. Things proved simpler with regard to the personal future of the parliamentarians—only Russian ones, however. It was suggested that they participate in the work of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet and in other republic structures. Obviously, it is suggested that deputies from other republics resolve with their own republic leadership questions of finding employment.

Thus a simple stalemate is taking shape. The corps of USSR people's deputies will be preserved until the expiry of their powers. But can a person be a deputy of a nonexistent country? The USSR Supreme Soviet is being abolished. But how can this be done when the Congress alone possesses the right of dissolution, but its decisions have beforehand been declared unconstitutional and, consequently, null and void? The Russian leaders have every reason to suppose that the extraordinary congress would, at the least, act as a brake on the realization of their plans and reforms. If we fail to find legitimate and worthy solutions to this problem, we are threatened either with something like the ghost of sailor Zheleznyak, which has been haunting us for more than 70 years, or with the formation of a powerful center of opposition to the Belovezhskaya agreements, laying claim to the legitimacy of its existence.

The Union parliamentarians' meeting with the Russian leaders took place the day before the start of the discussion of the trilateral agreements in the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, which, it has been announced, will be addressed by Russian President B. Yeltsin. The debate promises to be difficult. The situation is exacerbated by the fact that a joint session of the USSR Supreme Soviet will be held in the Kremlin on the same day and at the same time and might be addressed by USSR President M. Gorbachev. The leaders of the Russian parliament made a warning strike against the Kremlin by announcing that all members of the Russian deputation to the USSR Supreme Soviet must report to their own session. At the same time the deputies were reminded that they have already violated discipline once by voting in support of the draft Union treaty before it was discussed in the Russian parliament.

However, to judge from the reaction of many Russian Union deputies, this call to order did not make any particular impression on them after their dealings with A. Lukyanov. This means that there will be a heated debate in the Kremlin too.

Efforts To Convene Continue

OW1412035891 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1400 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Vladimir Samarin, chief initiator of the convocation of an extraordinary congress of USSR People's Deputies, has said that by Friday [13 December] morning the activists he leads had collected some 360 signatures in support of the project. He also complained that one subscription list with about 30 signatures had been stolen on Thursday [12 December].

According to Mr. Samarin, after the required minimum of 442 signatures were collected and forwarded to Mikhail Gorbachev, the activists would have to wait no less than 3 more days before the president ordered the congress convocation. Should an order of this kind fail to appear for some reason, the initiators would independently form an oranizing committee and hold the congress 10-12 days thereafter. The idea is to prevent the Commonwealth of Independent States from taking over the powers of what remains of the Soviet Union.

Supreme Soviet

Constitutional Committee Issues Statement

PM1312154591 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 13 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

[TASS report: "Constitutional Oversight Committee Statement"]

[Text] In view of the exceptional significance for the country's future of the questions to which the documents signed by the heads of the Republic of Belarus, the RSFSR and Ukraine are devoted, the USSR Constitutional Oversight Committee has issued a statement in which it deems it essential to draw attention to the legal aspect of these acts. The statement was presented to journalists at a news conference held at the committee 11 December.

The claim in the agreement that "The USSR as a subject of international law and a geopolitical reality has ceased to exist" can only be regarded as a political assessment of the situation and has no legal force, according to the committee. As sovereign states, the republics are entitled to conclude treaties on interstate associations among themselves and with other states. At the same time individual republics cannot take it upon themselves to resolve questions affecting the rights and interests of others. The agreement's provision on the cessation of activity of organs of the former Union on the territory of the Commonwealth states should viewed from this angle. They can halt their own activity only after the question of the USSR's future and the determination of the successor to its rights and obligations has been constitutionally resolved. A different approach could make society, including the country's defense, dangerously unmanageable.

The committee members are seriously concerned by the statement that the application of the norms of third states, including the former USSR, is not permitted on the territory of the said states. The legal vacuum created in such an event could adversely affect the protection of citizens' rights and freedoms and the regulation of social relations which remain in the sphere of joint activity of Commonwealth members.

The committee reminds people that international and interrepublic treaties signed by the presidents or other authorized representatives of states come into force only after their ratification by the Supreme Soviets. The committee draws attention to the need to tackle all questions concerning relations among the states and peoples of our country on the basis of the principles of constitutional legality, the paramountcy of the law, and observance of international norms.

Committee Discusses Provisional Defense Accord

OW1412033591 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2025 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A work group involving all former republics of the USSR except for the Baltic states met at the USSR Supreme Soviet on Friday [13 December] to work on a provisional defence agreement for the transitional period, said deputy chairman of the Defence and Security Committee of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, Aleksandr Kotenkov.

A future agreement is likely to contain measures to carry out the military reform and enhance the stability of the Army, as well as security guaranties for all signatories to

the treaty. In addition to this, the agreement will set rules to finance the Armed Forces and rule out their use in regional conflicts.

Deputies Stay in Moscow, Not To Return Home

LD1512204991 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 2000 GMT 15 Dec 91

[Text] Here is some news from Moscow: Despite the fact that the USSR Supreme Soviet has ingloriously ended its existence, deputies who arrived in Moscow from the republics and distant parts have both lost out and have gained nothing for their pains; some of them are not even contemplating returning.

According to unofficial data, 63 deputies who earlier worked in the Union parliament on a permanent basis, have received two and three-room apartments in Moscow in the Solntsevo district. Now they will all live together as a big family on Ulitsa Lukinskaya, house No. 1, entrance 2. In order to ensure the peace and protection of the deputies, the entrance is being guarded by the militia.

Political & Social

Gorbachev Views Future in Changing World

Favors Constitutional Resolution

LD1312202991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1957 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow, 13 Dec (TASS)—USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev today met a group of leading journalists from the American magazine TIME and answered their questions. Dwelling upon the political situation in the country, he expressed himself in favor of a constitutional resolution of the crisis which has arisen, and stressed that he is doing everything necessary to prevent possible confrontation in the country.

On the possibility of a military coup, Mikhail Gorbachev stated: It is out of the question, although there is a danger that conservative forces could try to take advantage of the difficulties, but he is certain that they incapable of rallying the Army in order to stage a putsch. However, he believes there is a more real threat of mass disorders arising from people's worsening material position. Concerted efforts are needed to prevent this. The USSR president considers that aid from foreign countries could play a significant role in this matter.

'No Sensations Today'

LD1312132491 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1301 GMT 13 Dec 91

[By TASS parliamentary correspondent Tamara Zamyatina]

[Excerpt] Moscow, 13 Dec (TASS)—There will be no sensations today, Andrey Grachev, leader of the USSR president's press service, has said. He was answering a question from journalists as to whether the resignation of Mikhail Gorbachev would follow the support by the leaders of the Central Asian republics for the agreement on forming a commonwealth of independent states. [passage omitted]

Reaction to Ashkhabad Meeting

LD1312133891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1244 GMT 13 Dec 91

[By a TASS correspondent]

[Text] Moscow, 13 Dec (TASS)—USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev is satisfied that the process of discussing the questions of the country's future is acquiring a broad and representative character. Journalists were informed today about the president's reaction to the results of the Ashkhabad meeting of the heads of the Central Asian republics by Andrey Grachev, head of his press service.

The process of creating a commonwealth of sovereign states, which began in Brest, is embracing all the members of the former Union, and this makes it possible to bring all potential legal successors of the USSR into it, the president considers. This is an important factor, which will make it possible to avoid confrontations at the time of adopting very important decisions on the future of statehood and on genuinely democratic reforms. This process also corresponds to Mikhail Gorbachev's ideas regarding constitutional procedures for adoption of decisions, the president's aide said.

Andrey Grachev told the journalists about the telephone conversations held between Mikhail Gorbachev, Boris Yeltsin, and Leonid Kravchuk, following the declaration by the Ukrainian president that he is the supreme commander-in-chief of the republics' armed forces. Mikhail Gorbachev drew their attention to the fact that he sees no provisions in the Ukrainian leadership's decisions on the armed forces which describe the special features of the transitional period, or which qualify the fact that any fundamental changes must be introduced in concert with all sides and within the framework of a joint defense treaty. The Ukrainian president assured Mikhail Gorbachev that what is at issue are the measures that will be planned for stage-by-stage implementation in strict concert with other members of the commonwealth. During the transitional period, control of the armed forces will be undertaken, as before, by the united command, and in the framework of enforced procedures.

'Likely To Step Down'

LD1412001691 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 2300 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Text] An aide to President Gorbachev's press secretary, Aleksandr Likhotal, has said Mikhail Gorbachev is likely to step down after the parliaments of the former Soviet

republics endorse the idea of a Commonwealth of Independent Nations. Aleksandr Likhotal also said the Soviet president was still critical of that idea and saw the accord among the Russian, Belarussian, and Ukrainian leaders as a step toward catastrophe.

Spokesman on Commonwealth

LD1412123191 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 2234 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Question and answer session with Andrey Grachev, chief of the press service of the president of the USSR, with unidentified members of studio audience of "young people"; from the studio, the "13-31" segment of the "VID" program—live or recorded]

[Excerpts] [Announcer] Our guest today is the chief of the press service of the President of the USSR, Andrey Grachev. [Grachev enters to applause and takes his seat in the center of the studio] [passage omitted: question about the current name of the country, to which Grachev replies with jokes about different possible sets of initials]

[Question] After the signing of the union treaty [as heard] between Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus, what role will be assigned to Gorbachev in this new state formation?

[Grachev] Well, as they say, that is the million dollar question. But in the first place, this is not a union treaty between Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus, but a commonwealth treaty. Indeed, as I understand it, what those leaders do not want to sign is precisely a union treaty. So it is a commonwealth, a commonwealth [previous word in English] as the English say. As for what Gorbachev's role might be, I do not know. I do not think by any stretch of the imagination that the point of the meeting in Belarus was to find some kind of special place for Gorbachev. Though neither do I think that for Gorbachev the main thing is to find a place for himself. I think there are certain grounds for saying that he has now stopped thinking about his official place, his position, and now he only thinks about his place in history. [passage omitted]

[Question] Would you tell us, please, whether President Gorbachev will, in the near future, be controlling the nuclear potential of the former Union, and if it is not Gorbachev, then who will it be?

[Grachev] If it is not Gorbachev, then I do not know. I know only that the whole world will be more calm if it is Gorbachev.

[Question] Andrey Serafimovich, will true-thinking Muslims be able to rest free of fears of the new Soviet Union?

[Grachev] Well, I am neither Orthodox nor Muslim, but in principle I hold the same views as Nazarbayev, who said a few days ago that any attempt to construct a state on ethnic principles is a return to the Middle Ages. This is particularly true now at the end of the 20th century, when everything in the world is becoming much more global, when borders are disappearing, and even more so when that very disappearance of borders is becoming a source of security. For borders represent conflict, war. [passage omitted: Question and answer on possible nationalities policies in the new state. Grachev says that extreme nationalism is always an instrument of power]

[Question] What chance do you think there is of the Soviet Union becoming another Yugoslavia? How probable is it that there could be a war between Russia and Ukraine—to imagine the improbable?

[Grachev] Although parallels are rather frequently drawn between Yugoslavia and the Union—let us call it Union in the absence of an alternative name—I think the parallel is a purely invented one. It seems to me that, in this country, the threat of conflict derives most of all not from large-scale interethnic clashes, but from social conflict. We are curently entering a very difficult and dangerous high-risk zone, with a society ill-prepared for it. And the conflict between past and future, as I would describe it, could prove very dangerous here.

[Question] Tell us, please, may I put to you a question which may at first sight appear strange: why is Mikhail Sergeyevich so unhappy about the union of three Slav republics? After all, this agreement to some extent resolves the crisis into which the Union treaty had lapsed. It is not a union, but it does represent joint economic, domestic, and foreign policies, and open borders. Why, then, is Mikhail Sergeyevich against this agreement, unless it is a consequence of the fact that he has been left without any kind of instrument of power, that is, the center which Gorbachev himself represented and which now does not exist?

[Grachev] Well, I suppose that to rid himself of such suspicions, Gorbachev would have to say that he makes no connection between himself and any form of a future state. Although for any normal politician that is not easy to explain. Be that as it may, given that everyone suspects him of it, I believe that it would probably be expedient for him to do that. Although he says, all the rest—and not only that, but even the phrasing on the election of a possible president of the future union mentioned in the draft Union Treaty—it is very tough for Gorbachev as he is now, perhaps the toughest thing of all, because election by the citizens is mentioned, which is very difficult to assume in the present situation. In the future perhaps [pauses] ... I do not know.

But you asked why, what are his complaints about this formula? It would be better, of course, for him to answer for himself, but I shall reply citing my own complaints. My complaints are not so much on the formula as such, as over how that formula came about. I do not believe that Gorbachev would reject any formula, whatever it might be, if it had been worked out in a constitutional, democratic, open, and public way, even if that formula made no provision for a presidential structure.

[Question] So the complaints are procedural more than anything else?

[Grachev] Not only procedural. And as for the issue of a division into Slavs and non-Slavs, we have already said this is also a very big question.

[Question] All republics have been invited to join the treaty.

[Grachev] That is so, is it not? To join the Slavs. That is roughly how Nazarbayev reacted. He said that if we are all equal and sovereign, why are we being asked to join something? Why could we not be participants in drawing up the formula? Yes, I think that is a reasonable position to take.

[Question] If no Union treaty is signed, and the republics exist separately, what do you think they would face then?

[Grachev] I do not know. I think that they would face conflict—not so much with each other, but with reality and with the times, as it were. The result would be that when the whole world is entering the 21st century—take the example of Europe, where borders are being abolished and single citizenship and a single currency are being introduced—we would be going back to the 19th century.

[Question] Andrey Serafimovich, the Slav states have united. But what awaits the Slavs living in the other former Union republics? Who will be able to defend them? I am from Lithuania myself, so I am interested above all in the Russian people living in the Baltic region.

[Grachev] Well, first of all I think that this is a question that the leaders of the Slav states that are linking up should ask themselves, because they undoubtedly bear responsibility for these Slavs. Secondly, let me say that I am not very fond of the term Slav state. Is Russia a Slav state? Let us calculate who lives in this country and what the percentages are? They live here historically. They are at home here. And surely this is no bad thing for Russia. This is a source of richness for her, and one must thank God for it. There is an excellent historian, (Mikhail Gefter), who said that our country—let us not call it Union—is a world of worlds. It is said that there are East-West and North- South conflicts in the world. Our country has both the one and the other, and more besides, and various epochs to boot. We are a sort of reduced model of the world. If we find a model of harmonious coexistence and a solution to these conflicts, it will be the world's salvation.

Resignation Possibility

LD1512123891 Budapest Kossuth Radio Network in Hungarian 0730 GMT 15 Dec 91

[Text] In Moscow, a redistribution of power is under way. Correspondent Gabor Izbeki asked (Karen Karagezyan), one of President Gorbachev's deputy spokesmen, whether Mikhail Gorbachev's resignation can be expected in the near future.

[Karagezyan is heard briefly in Russian, fading into Hungarian translation] I do not think this can or needs to be answered with a definite yes or no. On the basis of what was said at a detailed news conference the other day, Gorbachev considers the creation of the commonwealth to be a mistake. Up to now, the president has remaining firm in his stance that a confederative federal state should be formed in place of the Soviet Union. The fact that this is the opinion of the president does not mean that he is choosing the path of confrontation or that he will act against the commonwealth. The president, in fact, has great respect for the will of the three republics that signed the Minsk agreement, and the five Central Asian republics that have also joined. He will not act against this. He will merely draw attention to what he considers to be the danger concealed in this. Gorbachev's stance is that if this commonwealth does not mean some kind of union, but some kind of loose federation, then it is finished and he does not see a role for himself in this and will resign.

(Karen Karagezyan) was asked what plans the former president of the former Soviet Union would have, if it can be phrased this way without jumping the gun?

(Karagezyan) replied: Let me first reply to this by saying that you can still call Gorbachev the president of the Soviet Union, for he is still that. It is a different issue that we are participants in a very complicated, rapid process, which if it ends in the way the three parties signing the treaty believe, will, in reality, lead to the formation of a new state structure.

Gorbachev is now analyzing the situation with his colleagues. What I said earlier, that the president considers the treaty a mistake but will not act against it, is the result of this analysis. Gorbachev has held talks over the phone with Ukrainian President Kravchuk, who is already commander-in-chief of the Ukrainian Armed Forces. According to my knowledge, the end of the conversation was that Kravchuk agreed that until the new commonwealth really takes shape, until it is decided how the matter of supervision of nuclear weapons is to be carried out within this, until then, matters connected with the direction of the army and primarily the strategic nuclear weapons will be carried out in the old way. Everything will stay in the hands of President Gorbachev.

TIME Interview Noted

LD1512000191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 2320 GMT 14 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Mikhail Kolesnichenko]

[Text] New York, 15 Dec (TASS)—USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev has given an interview to the influential United States weekly, "TIME" magazine, in which he denied rumors about his anticipated resignation and

expressed confidence that during the transitional period he must remain as president of the country. "I want there to be a gradual process in the country, not one which will cause disintegration and chaos", the Soviet leader stressed in his interview with the United States journalists. "Otherwise I shall use my presidential powers as commander-in-chief of the Armed Forces. It is now extremely important not to lose control of the situation".

Referring to the agreement on the Commonwealth of Independent States, M.S. Gorbachev stated: "I don't think the Commonwealth offers any more than the proposed Union treaty ... from the very beginning I told my comrades that there are certain positive aspects to the Minsk agreements. If you compare the economic section of the Union treaty with these agreements, you can see their similarity. At the same time I think that negative aspects must be singled out. These three republics have no right to proclaim that the Soviet Union no longer exists".

"I don't want this question to be settled on the streets. I am using my powers to ensure that this process goes ahead in a normal and constitutional manner", the Soviet leader noted. The USSR president also gave an assurance that he would keep the country's nuclear forces under control during the transitional period. "All the alarming rumors, both here and abroad, as to who will have his finger on the nuclear button, are baseless," he stressed.

The USSR president stated that he always has regarded the policy of the George Bush administration toward the Soviet Union as constructive support for his efforts. At the same time, M. S. Gorbachev expressed dissatisfaction with several steps by the American side. "President Bush and Secretary of State Baker are two of the most important people for me," he said. "They regard the processes taking place in this country as international affairs. However, the United States has taken several steps recently, particularly on the eve of the referendum in Ukraine, which, I should say, were not well considered. They were regarded here by some as attempts to stimulate separatism in Ukraine. I told the president this when we spoke on the telephone. I want our partners to be guided by a balanced and well considered approach with regard to us, especially now. Mr. Baker was rather hasty with the statement that "the Soviet Union no longer exists". At a time when we are trying as before to come to grips with [razobratsya v] the situation, the United States, it seems, knows everything already. I don't think that this is a manifestation of loyality, in particular, with regard to those of us who favor partnership and all-around cooperation. It is in our common interests for this process to end sucessfully and without surprises."

M.S.Gorbachev called on Western countries to give urgent aid to the Soviet Union. "We need your aid now. Right away. Stop dithering, otherwise in the end we shall all have to pay a high price. You have to assist the reforms of the commonwealth member- states, and, first and foremost, Russia. If you gave help to Poland and Hungary then Russia undoubtedly deserves this," the USSR president stressed. Answering a question about the possibility of another coup, M.S. Gorbachev said in part: "I don't believe there can be any question of a military coup. Neither I, nor Yeltsin, nor the democrats will resort to that. But there could be a gross violation of the law and of discipline. What is needed in the transitional period is a strengthening of executive authority, but not diktat. Following their defeat the conservatives and the reactionaries are gathering their forces and are hoping for revenge, banking on the difficulties in the country."

The Soviet leader warned, however, that disturbances of order and the continuing decline in the economy could bring people out on to the streets. This would allow "conservative elements" to take advantage of the situation for their own purposes, he remarked.

The American journalists also enquired of Gorbachev what role he will play in the future of his country. "I have already achieved my life's main goal," the USSR president said. "At the same time I have the feeling that the capital I have accumulated needs to be fully utilized for the freedom of my country and of international relations. I feel that I have within me enough strength to go forward."

Silayev Delivers Interstate Economic Briefing

Assesses Situation as 'Better'

LD1312181391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1357 GMT 13 Dec 91

[by TASS correspondent Nikolay Zheleznov]

[Text] Moscow, 13 Dec (TASS)—The meeting of the heads of government of the independent states which will take place in Moscow 18-19 December will be a logical continuation of the Sunday meetings of the presidents of Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine in Minsk, and of today's meeting of the heads of the sovereign states of Central Asia and Kazakhstan in Ashkhabad. This was stated at a briefing today by Ivan Silayev, head of the Interstate Economic Committee. He described the fact that the Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan are joining the agreement on the Commonwealth of Independent States as an important political step which creates favorable conditions for economic reforms.

Ivan Silayev voiced confidence that in December the parliaments of all the states that have declared themselves the cofounders of the Commonwealth will ratify "this historic act". He thinks that it is quite natural that the Central Asian republics propose to include in the text of the agreement a point which would confirm the main statutes of the Economic Community Treaty.

When asked: "Won't Russia make another concession, this time to the Central Asian states, in delaying the date of price liberalization?", Ivan Silayev answered: "I am

sure that this will not happen. This question was already discussed at the last meeting of the Council of Heads of Government, and the main difficulties in coordinating the date for the beginning of the reform only consisted of fears that there could be a big cash deficit in the republics".

In Silayev's assessment, at present the situation is better: banks have sorted out their cash problem, in particular by issuing large banknotes.

Discusses Coming Agenda

OW1412042291 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1400 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Ivan Silayev, chairman of the Interstate Economic Council, told journalists Friday [13 December] that whether or not other republics will join the Commonwealth of Independent States will become clear before the end of this month. The CIS documents might have to be amended as some of the republics suggest, For instance, the Central Asian republics and Kazakstan intend to include in the economic agreement a confirmation of the pledges they made earlier under the Economic Community Treaty.

Mr. Silayev noted with satisfaction that the ten republics which had signed the Treaty on Economic Community were now turning into a new commonwealth. He also welcomed the statements by the commonwealth founders that some East European countries might join it. "Our economy," Ivan Silayev explained, "is linked with the economies of Poland and Czechoslovakia no less than with those of Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia".

At its session scheduled in Moscow for next Wednesday or Thursday, the Council of 12 prime ministers will discuss ways to coordinate the freeing of prices in various republics, I. Silayev said. On the possibility of postponing price liberalization at the request of Central Asian republic till after January 2, Mr. Silayev said that "it might be dangerous." According to him, the council might also discuss the hard currency situation and the servicing of the USSR's foreign debt.

The premiers will also discuss the future of the Interstate Economic Council or another body of this kind. The Ukrainian, Belarussian and Kazakh prime ministers, as well as Russia's deputy prime minister Gennadiy Burbulis called for preserving a structure that would coordinate the economic efforts of the republics.

Diplomats Replace Politicians to Baltics

OW1412080791 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1543 GMT 13 Dec 91

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] It has become known to DP [Diplomatic Panorama] that the USSR President M. Gorbachev signed executive orders December 10 appointing professional diplomats as leaders of the Soviet delegations at the talks with Baltic countries. Eduard Shevardnadze (for Lithuania) has been replaced by Ambassador Viktor Smolin, Aleksandr Yakovlev (for Latvia)—by deputy-head of the USSR Foreign Ministry's 2nd European Depaartment Valentin Kopteltsev, Anatoliy Sobchak (for Estonia)—by the former Soviet ambassador to France Yuriy Dubinin.

The opening of talks between the USSR and Latvia—explained Valentin Kopteltsev—depends on many circumstances, including the events in our country. He stressed Moscow was interested in starting as soon as possible.

In the opinion of V. Kopteltsev, the talks may well begin early next year after Christmas holidays in Latvia and other Baltic countries.

The priority in those talks will be given by V. Kopteltsev to the rights of the so-called "alien," or "Russian-speaking" population of Latvia. That includes the Soviet military deployed in Latvia. A withdrawal of those troops is the priority for the other side.

On the one hand, the position is understandable, on the other, the problem is objectively difficult since the servicemen, officers in the first place, have to be accommodated in Russia or other republics.

V. Kopteltsev found it difficult to answer the question on the line-up of the delegation for talks with Latvia. Originally the delegation led by A. Yakovlev was to have included 12 people. V. Kopteltsev thinks there may be some changes, though "continuity will be preserved."

V. Kopteltsev is particularly interested to have in his delegation spokesmen of Russia and Belarus, as Latvia's closest neighbours. That should be arranged between the Foreign Ministries of the USSR, Russia, and Belarus.

Congress of Democratic Reforms Movement Meets

TASS Profile

LD1512101491 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0645 GMT 13 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Lydumila Aleksandrova]

[Text] Moscow, 13 Dec (TASS)—"A movement for the transitional period, having as its objective a smooth transition to a new state of society without civil wars, bloody conflicts, or complications," is how Eduard Shevardnadze described the Democratic Reforms Movement [MDR], of which he is one of the founders and leaders. The inaugural congress of the Movement, which was founded in July by a group of eminent politicians and economists from among the former leaders of the Party and the state, will take place 14-15 December in the "Rossiya" cinema and concert hall, in Moscow.

The congress will elect the MDR's leading bodies and approve the rules of the movement and its program statement. The forum's main task is to determine the role and tasks of the MDR in the current political situation. In the summer, when the movement was being set up, it was effectively conceived as a democratic alternative to the CPSU and the RSFSR Communist Party. The disappearance of the Communist Party from the political stage brought with it the need for a review of the MDR's tasks and tactics.

Among the founders of the movement were former party leaders, like Eduard Shevardnadze, Aleksandr Yakovlev, and Arkadiy Volskiy; and influential representatives of the democratic camp, like Moscow Mayor Gavriil Popov and St. Petersburg Mayor Anatoliy Sobchak. The Republican Party of the Russian Federation, the People's Party of Free Russia, and the Russian Party for Democratic Transformations [Rossiyskaya Partiya Demokraticheskikh Preobrazovaniy] (set up within the framework of the MDR) joined the movement. The majority of members of the Science and Industry Council [Nauchno-Promyshlenniy Soyuz], which brings together the directors of state enterprises and the leaders of enterprise associations in all the republics, have declared their support for the movement.

As for the radical democratic camp, many of its representatives believe the MDR is "the movement of a new nomenklatura." The "Democratic Russia" movement did not wish to join forces with the MDR. To date, "DemRossiya" is fairly cautious about the MDR, evidently seeing it as a potential political competitor.

In the six months of its existence, the MDR has managed to become an impressive force, already uniting around one million members. Democratic organizations from 14 former republics will participate in the inaugural congress. The movement leaders have stressed several times that the MDR's main political task is to obtain the creation of "a single democratic space" on the territory of the former USSR.

Shevardnadze on Gorbachev

LD1412130491 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1235 GMT 14 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Lyudmila Aleksandrova]

[Text] Moscow, 14 Dec (TASS)—Although USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev has stated his intention to resign, Eduard Shevardnadze, minister for external relations, does not think that this "will take place either today or tomorrow." Shevardnadze addressed journalists at a briefing during the founding congress of the Movement for Democratic Reforms which opened in Moscow today.

In Shevardnadze's words, Gorbachev "is working very hard." "And both he and I want to encourage the process of the formation of a Commonwealth. I think that he can make a very useful contribution to this process. He understands this, as do the Russian authorities and the other republics." "I have advised Gorbachev not to rush into resignation."

Shevardnadze has said that, as before, he is carrying out his role as minister of external relations, since his ministry has still not been abolished. Replying to questions about control of Soviet nuclear weapons, the minister stated that "for the present, everything is fine, but this is a complex issue." I could not now say with complete conviction that there are no problems here, he emphasized. Even now, contradictory pronouncements can be heard in the republics on this issue. At the present moment, there is one finger on the nuclear button—the finger of the president, stated the minister. However, in his view, "we should not be complacent about this." In connection with the creation of the new inter-state formation, the issue arises as to who will have the right to control this "ill-fated button."

Eduard Shevardnadze has expressed the view that the danger of a dictatorship or a putsch remains as before. "It is irresponsible to soothe people and tell them that nothing is going to happen," he stated.

Warns Against 'Social Explosion'

OW1412172591 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1444 GMT 14 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Mr. Eduard Shevardnadze, a leader of the Movement for Demoratic Reform and Soviet foreign minister, [words indistinct] again against the serious danger of social explosions and urged politicians to coordinate their steps in combating the crisis.

Speaking on Saturday [14 December] at the opening of the constituent congress of the Movement for Democratic Reform, Mr. Shevardnadze said that its mission was to ensure the implementation of the reforms which, he said are a matter of life a death. "The epoch of authoritarianism is coming to on end," he said. "The main questions facing our country and the world are: Will not the current historic turn send all our life tumbling down? Can our domocracy prevent a negative course of events?"

Mr. Shevardnadze highly estimated the Minsk Agreement between the three republics and said that the Soviet Union "can no longer carry on the old way" and that the community of independent states "will still have to prove its viability". "At what price this will be proved is a matter of great importance".

As far as the social situation goes, Mr. Shevardnadze looks at it rather pessimistically. He said he even feared to "give figures illustrating the real scope of coming unemployment", and said that all members of the community "will plunge into total economic depression". He warned once again that "the lumpen, hunger and cold are a combination of an enormous destructive power".

He also said that without new and more flexible political figures, such a social explosion could not be prevented.

Rutskoy on Minsk Agreements

OW1412171091 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1444 GMT 14 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russia's vice-president has accused democratic forces of "having been carried away by the struggle for political influence", forgetting that "one cannot make life any better if one does not do anything".

At the constituent congress of the Movement for Democratic Reform on Saturday, Mr. Rutskoy expressed doubt about the possibility of accomplishing "radical reforms" by the autumn of 1992. "Everybody supports reforms," he said, "but there is no clear-cut programme. Neither do Soviet ministries have practical experience in implementing reforms".

Speaking about the Minsk agreements between the three republics, Aleksandr Rutskoy described them as "a new step in uniting people on a cardinally new basis". He noted, however, that he could not agree with those who expressed bewilderment about the procedure of creating a new inter-state entity. He said that new causes of tension have emerged, among them the position of the Central Asian states and "undesirable opposition to the Soviet President".

Mr. Rutskoy said that there were reasons for doubting the viability of the agreements, hastily concluded in Belorussia. He said in this connection that the provisions of the agreements on getting up a community of independent states were "interpreted differently in Moscow, Kiev and Minsk". Mr. Rutskoy added that the parliament of the Ukraine "has unilaterally ammended" the agreement, while President Kravchuk proclaimed himself commander-in-chief.

Rutskoy Critical of Yeltsin

LD1412175591 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1527 GMT 14 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Lyudmila Aleksandrova]

[Text] Moscow 14 Dec (TASS)— Russian Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoy has criticized the economic policy of the republic's government and president. Rutskoy, who is one of the founders of the Movement for Democratic Reforms, delivered a report at the Movement's constituent congress, which opened in Moscow today.

The vice president asserted that "there is no fundamental disagreement within the Russian leadership" over the need for profound reforms, but he expressed doubt about "whether certain ministers have enough practical experience to implement reform." He even went so far as to speak of a "lack of authority." "At the end of the day," he asked the congress, "is anybody going to govern this state?"

A. Rutskoy repeated his view that deregulation of prices should be the result of a whole series of measures aimed at demonopolization. In the present situation freedom to set prices inevitably becomes the freedom to set monopolistically high prices. This will not lead to an increase in production, he said.

The speaker warned the Russian authorities of a dangerous increase in social tension. "It is no good making promises if they cannot be delivered," he said. He expressed doubt that the economy would begin to stabilize by Autumn 1992 as President Boris Yeltsin promised in his address to the peoples of Russia at the 5th Congress of RSFSR People's Deputies.

Yakovlev on Tasks

LD1412174391 Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Networks in Russian 1630 GMT 14 Dec 91

[Text] The inaugural congress of the Democratic Reform Movement opened in Moscow today.

[Begin recording] [Correspondent] The congress opened with a brief introductory speech by Eduard Amvrosiyevich Shevardnadze, after which a report was delivered by Aleksandr Nikolayevich Yakovlev. Among the most important principles of the movement, he said, are intellectual, economic, and political human rights; a parliamentary republic; legality and law and order; and competition and equal opportunities for and constructive cooperation by all citizens. The journalists, of course, were interested in the question of how these ideas will be realized.

[Yakovlev] From the very beginning our task has been the creation, strengthening, and expansion of the general democratic space in independence and autonomy. I know that even representatives of the democratic forces of the Baltic region have come as observers. Until we really have that democratic space based on rights and law, I think the individual will be left marking time in the mud.

[Shevardnadze] In general, every movement and every party has a claim to something. But I do not think we will now, in such an uncertain situation, be staking a claim and aspiring to become the ruling movement and the ruling party.

[Leningrad Mayor Anatoliy Sobchak] For us this congress is not so much an organizational event as an exchange of views on the main issues of the country's life. The task of the congress is above all to try to work out principled views on the future of the country. People today are so isolated and bewildered that I think unifying movements like this one are sure to find a response in their hearts. [end recording]

Yakovlev Supports Plebiscite

LD1412212291 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 2000 GMT 14 Dec 91

[Text] Leaders of the opening congress of the Movement for Democratic Reforms that opened in Moscow have voiced support for the agreement signed by Belarus, Russia, and the Ukraine to form a Commonwealth of Independent States.

However, as member of the movement's political council, Aleksandr Yakovlev, believes the accord should be regarded as a search for a way out of the deadlock and as an initiative.

Aleksandr Yakovlev spoke in favor of holding a plebiscite on this issue. In his opinion other variants are also possible. For instance, a compromise between this agreement and the draft of a union treaty being advocated by USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev.

Criticism at the economic policy of the government and president of Russia has been leveled at the congress by Vice President Aleksandr Rutskoy.

Rutskoy claimed that there were no disagreements in principle over the need for profound reform. However, right after this he questioned the competence of some ministers.

Entrepreneurship Main Goal

OW1412191491 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1700 GMT 14 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Movement for Democratic Reform (MDR) has proclaimed itself "a free association" of parties, organizations and individuals campaigning for the implementation of comprehensive reforms aimed at building a "socially-oriented state with a market economy". According to its policy statement, circulated at this organization's constituent congress on Saturday, in Moscow, its main goal is the promotion of entrepreneurship. Defending the interests of entrepreneurs the MDR is guided by the idea that "at the current moment the development of entrepreneurship meets the interests of the majority".

The Movement has announced its plans to give full backing to the privatisation of state property and the protection of private property, to the agrarian reform and to the creation of private farms.

It has supported the initiative of Belarus, Russia and the Ukraine to set up a community of independent states.

The Movement's policy statement condemns the ban on the communist-oriented organizations and rejects the diktat of any ideology.

Shevardnadze Interviewed

LD1512001791 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 2219 GMT 14 Dec 91

[Interview with USSR External Relations Minister Eduard Shevardnadze by Ye. Shilova at the Democratic Reform Movement Congress in Moscow on 14 December—recorded]

[Text] [Shilova] The inaugural congress of the Democratic Reform Movement has started in Moscow. The movement came into being in June 1991, and it now unites approximately 1 million people in all the republics of the former Soviet Union. Making a political speech, Aleksandr Yakovlev said the movement's main aim is the revival of the fatherland, first and foremost through the revival of people themselves. Therefore, any decision should be primarily for the people's benefit and not to satisfy the ambitions of individual politicians. In the interval, the movement's leaders replied to correspondents' questions.

Your movement was organized as an opposition to the CPSU. Couldn't you now take the responsibility of occupying the vacuum in political power?

[Shevardnadze] No, in general, every movement and every party has a claim to something. But I don't think we shall now, in such an uncertain situation, be staking a claim and aspiring to become the ruling movement and the ruling party, somehow to rule this commonwealth.

[Shilova] How do you see the center's role in the situation that has taken shape?

[Shevardnadze] The center is disintegrating gradually. I have spoken about the need to resolve very swiftly the issue of forming some kind of coordinating center, to call it by a different name—coordinating body, since this problem is becoming extremely acute.

Popov Interviewed

LD1512182291 Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Networks in Russian 1630 GMT 15 Dec 91

[Video report by V. Perfilyev from Democratic Reform Movement constituent congress in Moscow on 15 December, including recorded interview with Moscow Mayor Gavriil Popov; from the "TV Inform" newscast—introduced by program announcer Aleksey Druzhinin]

[Text] The constituent congress of the Democratic Reform Movement continued its work in Moscow today. [Video shows congress at work, including Yakovlev, Sobchak, Shevardnadze, and Popov in the Presidium; then Popov interviewed]

[Perfilyev] It can be said that the main subject of the debates at the congress was the creation of an opposition

force to the democrats who now hold power. In the opinion of the delegates, such opposition is necessary for the country and the people, as well as for the authorities themselves, in order to warn them against bureacracy, against pressure on the part of the anti-perestroyka forces, and in order to overcome indecisiveness and sluggishness in the implementation of reforms.

[Popov] It is for the first time that a public political movement has appeared in our country which openly sets protection and development of entrepreneurship as its program. I believe that only entrepreneurship and its success is capable of resolving all the issues in our country, that is to feed and to clothe, to enable people to earn the kind of wages which they deserve, to provide science and culture with resources, and to ensure the formation of an efficient army.

If it were to be just another political force which is, on the whole, in favor of everything but which still criticizes certain things, then it would undoubtedly sink. However, if we are talking about creating a real democratic opposition to a democratic government, then it will be a qualitatively new step in the development of our contry and our democracy. You know, of course, that in all democratic countries there are several democratic parties, and the people are free to compare their programs and to choose between them.

Supports Commonwealth

LD1512201791 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1817 GMT 15 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Lyudmila aleksandrova]

[Text] Moscow, 15 Dec (TASS)—The Democratic Reform Movement [MDR] supports the process of creating a Commonwealth of Independent States. It will support democratic forces in power in all republics and regions, but at the same time it will criticize "inconsistency, incompleteness, and slowness in the implementation of political and economic reforms." This is the essence of the political statement adopted today at the concluding stage of the two-day constituent congress the MDR held in Moscow.

One of the main aspects of the discussion at the congress was the question of what sort of a force the movement should be—opposition, constructive opposition, or in fact a movement supporting power. The most diverse opinions on this were expressed. The political statement, which was adopted after long discussions, says that the movement "is carrying out the course of constructive opposition to powers which revive the traditions of the administrative-command and apparatus system of power." The declaration of a position of strategic support for state structures and constructive criticism of specific measures does not permit the fusion of the MDR with the apparatus, and preserves the possibility for it to critically assess both power and its leaders, the document says.

The program statement adopted at the MDR Congress characterizes it as "a free association of political parties, public organizations, and individual participants favoring the implementation of a series of reforms called upon to guaranteee the transition from a totalitarian system to a social state with a market economy."

The documents names as a distinctive feature the fact that "it is oriented primarily toward the nascent market sectors of the economy and strives to express the interests of entrepreneurs, of which proprietors make up the social base." The MDR proclaims the development of enterprise as the main aim in the transitional period."

The MDR states that it does not lay claim to political monopoly and declares the open character of the movement. "Our movement is not a new superparty, but a businesslike and free commonwealth of the most diverse forces, parties, and associations of citizens," the document says. Representatives of the democratic movements of all 15 of the former Union republics were present at the constituent congress. From the major Russian parties, the following associated themselves with the MDR: the People's Party of Free Russia, the Russian Party for Democratic Transformations, the Republican Party of the Russian Federation, the Russian Peasant Party.

The Congress adopted the Rules of the MDR and elected the directorate: Aleksandr Yakovlev, Eduard Shevardnadze, Stanislav Shatalin, Anatoliy Sobchak, Gavriil Popov, Arkadiy Volskiy, and Vyacheslav Shostakovskiy were elected co-chairman of the MDR.

Alksnis, Deputies To Address Rights Rally

LD1512130791 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1100 GMT 15 Dec 91

[Text] The supporters of imperial ways continue their activities. The information and news agency [as heard] reports that the Committee for Protecting Political Prisoners and the Russian Revival Party are holding numerous protests in Moscow against the activities of the Baltic Republics Governments. They are currently picketing the Latvian, Lithuanian, and Estonian Embassies. They have also started a procession on Manezh Square, where a rally will take place at 1400 [1200 GMT]. People's Deputies Baburin, Chekhoyev, Colonel Alksnis, and television commentator Aleksandr Nevzorov will deliver speeches.

Russian 'Regent' Warns of 13 Dec Coup Attempt

LD1312133791 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian 1030 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Text] According to a report by the Russian news agency, Aleksey Brummel, who has declared himself to be the regent of the Russian monarchy, has issued the warning that today, 13 December, a military coup will take place in Russia.

In an interview with the Russian News Agency, he stated that according to his information, the plotted coup is to be headed by General Makashov [Yeltsin rival for the Russian presidency] and Zhirinovskiy, the leader of the Liberal-Democratic Party. According to the regent, Zhirinovskiy was promoted by the regent to the post of commander-in-chief and appointed by the regent as consul to Ukraine, but he has disobeyed his orders. Instead of leaving for his exile [as heard] in Ukraine, he is travelling to St. Petersburg.

Brummel states: If this raging fascist obscurantist is to head a political coup, he will be immediately arrested by my people and taken to the place of execution in Red Square.

Leaders Warned About Countering Public Opinion

LD1312142791 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1631 GMT 9 Dec 91

[From the "Television News Service" program—read by announcer]

[Text] Perestroyka today has taken such a pace that there is no longer anyone who can or even wants to glance back even slightly. Whatever our current leaders at the republic level say, they hardly have the right to cancel the importance of the nationwide referendum in the course of which almost (?74) percent of the citizens of our Union—whatever it is called now—spoke out unequivocally in favor of the preservation of our country as the USSR.

PRAVDA Intends To Continue Publishing

PM1312171991 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 13 Dec 91 pp 1,2

[Report by Georgiy Ovcharenko under general heading: "If the Law Still Exists, It Should Operate. Chronicle of the PRAVDA Blockade. Day Three"]

[Text] The deadline of the ultimatum on vacating two-thirds of the production area, presented to the PRAVDA editorial office by the publishing house, expired yesterday.

We are telling our readers that PRAVDA staff are remaining at their posts because they believe that the demands that have been made contradict existing legislation.

We are preparing future issues of the paper, although this is no easy matter: Most of the telephones are still cut off, there is no light, and our writers and visitors are not being admitted to the editorial offices. But there has been some pleasant news: The chief editor's city telephone is working. Well, we must be thankful to our dear, in every respect, publisher for small mercies, as the saying goes.

But to dispense with the irony, I would like to say a sincere and heartfelt thank you to all our readers and to people's deputies at all levels, who are giving us moral support in these difficult days for the editorial board. And thank you above all to our colleagues, who, irrespective of their views and beliefs, came to our press conference on Wednesday and have objectively covered all the current events concerning PRAVDA. They all believe, as we do, that questions connected with authorization, prohibition, and limitation of the rights, including property rights, of the media can only be decided by the courts. If this is not to be, we will return to monopolization of the press and diktat by the powers that be, which would crush glasnost and any manifestation of dissent. So the present dispute betwen the PRAVDA staff and the publishing house is not only an issue of preserving the country's oldest newspaper for society, but a political issue as well.

Unfortunately, for some reason this was not recognized by our colleague from IZVESTIYA, who put out under his own name a statement by Publishing House Director V. Leontyev to the effect that the PRAVDA staff are allegedly "trying to portray an ordinary property dispute as a major political scandal."

Incidentally, what would our colleague have written if his editorial office had been cut off from the rest of the world and from readers, had been deprived of basic conditions for doing its work and expressing its beliefs, if he was being told what office to sit in and whether or not to engage in commercial activity? I think he would have immediately claimed infringement of his political rights and interests.

That is precisely what the PRAVDA staff did. We want only one thing: To be treated in accordance with the law. And the law says that if the publishing house actually has started what you might call divorce proceedings with PRAVDA, whose name it has borne for decades and whose funds it has used to build up its material might, then it must be honest enough to share the fixed and circulating capital with us. Incidentally, the editorial board wrote to the publishing house asking it to set up the requisite liquidation and conciliation commissions and provide us with the settlement documents. We received no reply. Although, after the press conference, when we put this question to Vyacheslav Leontyev, he said that it was his personal right whether or not to give us the relevant documents. And that is that.

Fortunately, not everyone is so dismissive of the law. The day before yesterday, A. Brechalov, member of the Committee on the Mass Media, got through to the editor in charge of the issue (the chief editor and his deputies had had their telephones cut off). According to him, although in many respects he does not share the PRAVDA editorial board's stance, the publishing house's actions are totally arbitrary. On behalf of his leadership, Albion Vasilyevich proposed a hearing concerning the PRAVDA situation in the next few days at a committee session, with all interested parties being invited to attend. We do not know about the leadership

of the publishing house and the RSFSR Ministry of Information and the Press, but the PRAVDA staff accepted the offer.

But we are not sitting twiddling our thumbs: The relevant documents on the arbitrary behavior of the publishing house and the RSFSR Ministry of Information and the Press have been sent to the Russian and Moscow Prosecutor's Offices and the capital's Sverdlovskiy Rayon People's Court. If the law still exists in the country, it should operate.

When I passed these notes on to the compositors, the PRAVDA blockade was still going on.

Objections to New Name

PM1612113991 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 13 Dec 91 p 2

[Letter from V. Simonyan, president of "Pressa" Publishing House Board: "Impostors. Willy-Nilly?"]

[Text] The news that the PRAVDA Publishing House had named itself the PRESSA Publishing House has surprised us staffers of the PRESSA Publishing House. After all, this publishing house already exists. It was registered on 28 June in Moscow, and on 16 October it was registered at the RSFSR Ministry of Information and the Press, where it acquired a licence for publishing activity.

It seems to us that before making a statement about renaming itself, the PRAVDA Publishing House should have approached the RSFSR Ministry of Information and the Press, which has a register of names that have already been used. Anyway, why change so well-known a name as PRAVDA Publishing House in the first place. It is not the name, but the nature of things that matters.

[Signed] V. Simonyan, president of the PRESSA Publishing House Board, Moscow.

TASS Carries PRAVDA Review for 16 Dec

LD1612073991 Moscow TASS in English 0629 GMT 16 Dec 91

["PRAVDA Review"—TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow December 16 TASS—Today's PRAVDA reported the arrival of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker in Moscow on Sunday [15 December] for a working visit.

The purpose of his trip is to get first-hand information on the situation that has developed in the Soviet Union following the signing of an agreement by the leaders of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus on December 8 on the establishment of a Commonwealth of Independent States.

Vasiliy Izgarshev, PRAVDA's military news analyst, raises such an important issue as the future of the Soviet Armed Forces at a time when the Soviet Union has entered a period of final break-up.

The analyst believes that "sovereignty to all" has resulted not only in material difficulties for servicemen but also in a great moral damage. Pointing out that flare-ups of anti-Army sentiments become usual almost everywhere, Izgarshev emphasises that there is mounting sentiment about the need for the Army to defend the honour, dignity and the very lives of servicemen and members of their families on its own, without setting hopes on any other forces. If matters go to such lengths, the consequences of that could be unpredictible.

The analyst regards as the main thing the question whose orders today's soldiers, officers and generals should carry out. Suggesting a number of specific measures which, in his view, could facilitate a solution to the issue (such as the need to reduce the Army, to shorten the terms of compulsory service), Izgarshev stresses that "it is no business of the Army to get involved in political discord. Its purpose is to serve the native land, the one that we shall ultimately build".

Publicist Nikolay Kozhanov examines the problems of the workers' movement in the country. He believes that "the new authorities do not need a workers' movement".

In this connection he calls for unity, pointing out that "the working man cannot survive by acting alone. The sooner professional and political organisations of the working people get rid of confusion, discord, apathy and regain their initiative, the easier it will be for us to overcome obstacles that stand in the way to economic reforms, and the stronger and more reliable the working-class positions in the country's future set-up will be".

PRAVDA runs the text of an address by the club of the workers of Moscow "to the citizens of the USSR" which points out the need to urgently convene the sixth extraordinary congress of USSR people's deputies to discuss the state disintegration issue.

PRAVDA's correspondent Viktor Linnik, in a dispatch from New York, writes about the life and creative activity of Russian artist Mikhail Verbov.

International commentary highlights the item headlined "The agony of Somalia" by Igor Tarutin who points out in particular that bloody clashes between warring political groups have sharply intensified in the country's capital Mogadishu which has been almost completely ruined.

Military

Shaposhnikov Discusses Future of Armed Forces

On Coup Rumors, Union Plans

LD1312182891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1738 GMT 13 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Andrey Naryshkin]

[Text] Moscow, 13 Dec (TASS)—USSR Defense Minister Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov today denied rumors alleging that a military coup is being prepared in the USSR.

"As minister of defense I can state with the utmost authority that the situation in the Armed Forces is calm and under control. There is no possibility of a putsch involving the Army. We have learned from the bitter experience of the August events, when attempts were made to exploit the Armed Forces for political purposes", he said during a meeting with journalists.

Asked by a TASS correspondent about the future of Soviet forces in those states which remain outside the Commonwealth of Independent States, the minister said:

"In parallel with the draft plans for a defense union, a document is being drawn up on the status of the Armed Forces in those republics that do not wish to join the Commonwealth. This document will determine all the priorities".

Referring to the situation in Ukraine, Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov noted that the president of any republic is entitled to assume the duties of commander in chief of that republic's armed forces. "I am more worried about the transfer of our own Armed Forces to republican jurisdiction".

After discussing the present situation with the presidents of the USSR and the RSFSR, "we reached agreement with Leonid Kravchuk that precipitate steps would not be taken," he said, adding that changes in such a delicate sphere needed to be implemented gradually, after a timetable had first been defined and mechanisms worked out. Colonel General Boris Pyankov, deputy minister of defense, flew to Kiev today at the head of a group of generals and officers of the General Staff in order to settle these issues.

"As far as nuclear weapons, both tactical and strategic, and all backup facilities for them are concerned, these have been under central control and will remain so, no matter where they are stationed," Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov stressed. "None of the presidents of the sovereign states has any possibility of using them in any way," he explained.

Meets With Yeltsin

LD1512100291 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0925 GMT 15 Dec 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Sergey Petukhov]

[Text] Moscow, 15 Dec (TASS)—Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin and Aviation Marshal Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov, USSR defense minister, met on the evening of 14 December. As Pavel Voshchanov, head of the Russian president's press service, told a TASS correspondent, Boris Yeltsin and the USSR defense minister considered the concept of a defense union resulting from the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS]; principles of forming a united military-strategic space and of forming a single command over nuclear armed forces; and a united system of strategic armaments in aviation, rocket forces, and the Navy.

Possible candidates for the post of commander in chief of the CIS united armed forces were also considered at the meeting.

Lobov Dismissal Explained

LD1312190891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1806 GMT 13 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Andrey Naryshkin]

[Text] Moscow, 13 Dec (TASS)—Army General Vladimir Lobov's dismissal from the post of chief of general staff has given rise to many rumors and false interpretations both within the Army and the mass media. A TASS correspondent asked USSR Defense Minister Air Marshal Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov to explain the reasons for this decision.

"The press reports are regrettable since they present a version to readers which has nothing in common with reality," the defense minister said. "During the elaboration of fundamental positions for the preparation and implementation of military reform and for the radical transformation of the Armed Forces various options were considered, including the one supported by Vladimir Lobov. After they had been studied thoroughly and discussed, the collegiate of the Ministry of Defense adopted a decision which was reported by the USSR Defense Ministry to the USSR State Council and to the USSR president and was approved by them."

"However, even after this," the minister said, "General Lobov, who had verbally agreed with this decision, continued in fact to implement a policy of splitting the higher echelon of the military administration in two parallel structures—a policy which is not only objectively unproductive and fraught with the risk of withdrawal of the general staff and the Armed Forces from under the supervision of the Defense Ministry, but which also violates the principle of unified management. This became a serious obstacle to the reorganization of the armed forces and led to increasing disorganization in the work of the general staff and of the whole central apparatus and to disorientation among the officer cadres. Naturally, things could not continue further in this way. A decision to dismiss General Lobov from his post was necessary, and it was taken."

"Attempts to whip up the situation and to inflame unhealthy passions around it are unconstructive and unacceptable from a moral and ethical point of view as well as with regard to responsibility for the preservation of the unity of the officer corps and of stability in the Army and Navy environment," the minister concluded.

On Commonwealth, Nuclear Forces

LD1312221691 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1936 GMT 13 Dec 91

[News conference with USSR Defense Minister Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov and unidentified journalists on 13 December; place not given; from the "Topical Interview" program—recorded]

[Text] [Shaposhnikov] As defense minister I can state with the utmost authority that the situation in the Armed Forces is calm and under control, just as the situation in the country is calm and under control. There is no putsch or coup being prepared by officers of the entire army, and nor can there be. We already have been taught by the August events, when an attempt was made to use the army to support a putsch, military coup, and so on and so forth.

[Journalist] Let me ask you, if I may, about the Commonwealth of Independent States and nuclear forces.

[Shaposhnikov] Indeed this is a very serious issue and is of concern to the world community. However, I also wish to state that at the present time the nuclear weapons, both tactical and strategic, are under unified control in accordance with the system that was announced previously. None of the presidents of the sovereign states have an opportunity in any way to implement their use.

[Journalist] Yevgeniy Ivanovich, there was a report that the president of the Ukraine has appointed himself commander in chief of Ukraine's armed forces. Could you comment on this?

[Shaposhnikov] I wish to say that the president of any republic is entitled to do so. Another question that is of greater concern to me is the transfer of the Armed Forces located in their territory to the jurisdiction of the various republics. I have had a very lengthy and detailed conversation with Leonid Kravchuk on this subject. In addition, I have spoken with the USSR president and with Russian President Comrade Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin. Afterwards we agreed with Comrade Kravchuk that no precipitate and hasty steps would be taken. If Ukraine needs this process, it needs to be made a humane and civilized process.

Some sort of sequence, timetable, and mechanism will be worked out. And to this end Colonel-General Pyankov, deputy defense minister, flew out to Kiev today on behalf of the Defense Ministry. He is accompanied by a group of officers and generals of the General Staff, and they are with Comrade Kravchuk at this moment.

[Journalist] Does that mean that nuclear forces will also be subordinated to him?

[Shaposhnikov] No, it does not mean that at all. We spent a long time discussing this topic with him, and we reached full agreement that not only strategic nuclear forces, but also tactical nuclear weapons, and also all the facilities providing back-up for both strategic and tactical nuclear weapons will be under central command.

[Journalist] I also have the following question. The situation in the Dnestr region has deteriorated. There was a report today that people have been killed there. President Snegur cancelled his trip to Kiev, and there allegedly have been requests for help from the Army on the part of the Russian-speaking population.

[Shaposhnikov] There indeed has been a very serious incident today. An exchange of fire erupted in the Dubossary area. Several people on each side have been killed. But now the local procurator's office and an investigation team have gone out there from Kishinev.

As I already have declared to you on becoming defense minister, our Armed Forces should not interfere in all these conflicts taking place within or between republics. There are forces whose job it is to deal with internal order belonging to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and so on and so forth. We have a lot of presidents now, each fighting for his authority. And everyone wants to involve the Armed Forces.

What sort of armed forces would they be? I think that would be unacceptable for the Armed Forces in the present situation. That is why we have a supreme commander in chief and the State Council. If there are any instructions in this regard, we shall act according to them.

I would like to take advantage of this statement of mine, or rather our meeting today, to calm public opinion somehow and to appeal to the Armed Forces. Despite all the decrees and laws being adopted by different republics, I would like to appeal to them to remain calm and staunch, and not to forget that they take their orders from the USSR defense minister.

Allegiance Problems Faced by Troops Viewed

PM1612140991 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 16 Dec 91 pp 1-2

[Military Observer Vasiliyy Izgarshev "Opinion": "To Whom To Swear Allegiance?"]

[Text] We cannot go on living as we are now—that is glaringly obvious. Six years of perestroyka have passed.... Meanwhile, have you noticed, reader, that this term is being used increasingly rarely nowadays? Even the "father" of perestroyka, it seems, has replaced one word with two—the "transitional period." Thus these six years have left the store shelves barren, reduced the whole people to waiting in line, and have caused prices for goods and food to spiral even before the official "liberalization."

About five years ago it was traditionally believed that the best provided-for section of the population in our country was the military. Young men, particularly in the countryside, were keen to train as officers. Now the

prestige of the military profession has fallen sharply. These streetwise youngsters have realized that an officer's stripes do not promise them a life of plenty or of ease. It is not easy for an unmarried officer or NCO to live on his salary now. For the family man, it is even worse.

But as they say, man does not live by bread alone.... For men in uniform the morale aspect is more difficult. What has the universal sovereignization meant for the military? First and foremost, an explosion of anti-Army feelings. Never before in our country have there been attacks on the military. Soldiers and officers were welcome guests in families and labor collectives. I remember how Georgian villages near to border outposts used to hold rural festivals. They were never held without these welcome guests in uniform. And of course the people serving at the outposts were not just Georgians—the whole multinational country was represented at this section of the southern border, as in all other sections, furthermore.

But what has happened now? The eruption of nationalism and extremism which followed the proclamation of state independence has turned into hooligan attacks by some young men against the military. The local press is liberally sprinkled with anti-Army outbursts, often libelous ones. Recently I read in a central newspaper of an officer who was lying in the Turkmen Military District Army hospital having been savagely beaten up and robbed by local youngsters.

There are plenty of facts of this kind. The general staff is receiving a stream of tragic reports about the death, or rather, murder of soldiers. On the street, in the crowd, often right in front of their families. Recently a colonel was stabbed to death by a hooligan in Moscow. Criminal excesses have migrated from the country's trouble spots even to the capital.

Can all this be tolerated? The personnel of two academies in the capital have demanded that the authorities put a stop to this disgraceful phenomenon in society's life. If the law enforcement agencies cannot deal with criminals and protect the honor, dignity, health, and lives of our people, the military will be forced to do that by their own efforts. They have demanded that officers be issued with weapons of their own.

Meanwhile, this is just one of the many problems worrying the Armed Forces.

At the Russian Supreme Soviet session which ratified the three states' Brest accords, the question was rightly asked: "But what about the military oath? To whom should the military swear allegiance now?" The Russian Foreign Ministry regards the question as a technical one. The oath will be taken to the people and writing the text of the new oath is no great problem.

Maybe that is so. We are good at writing texts in our country. All sorts. But this is the oath! Someone entering the Armed Forces takes this oath once and for all.... But to whom? The people? Which one? In which Armed Forces? In which state?

Recently both Kremlin presidents, as reported, met with leading personnel of the Armed Forces. In the opinion of many of the participants in the meetings, the military believed the Russian president. He gave them answers to many urgent questions of military building. There are quite a few today. Questions such as: What should the Army and Navy be like? Split into national garrisons or unified under a single command? Who is going to give housing to homeless soldiers and their families? The issue concerns hundreds of thousands of people. Who will pay them at least a tolerable wage in the conditions of the approaching market? Whose finger will be on the nuclear button? Who will be in charge of our strategic forces?

Questions, questions. B.N. Yeltsin answered everything that the generals asked in his characteristic manner—precisely, concisely, and comprehensively.

Answers are one thing, and life behind the windows of the building on Arbat Street or the walls of the Kremlin often refuses to adapt to the Procrustean bed of presidential postulates.

But the main question for the military is still that of whom to serve. Whose orders to obey? Well, suppose that the trio united in the commonwealth of independent states is joined by the five participants in the conference in Ashkhabad. Even as cofounders. Then add some new ones. This is fine. In the present situation of stalemate to which we have been brought by the transitional period, that is, by perestroyka, this is the right step, I think. And it should be taken. But the main Army question is hardly being taken off the agenda now. After the ratification of the triple accord by the three parliaments, the Ukrainian president has declared himself commander in chief of his armed forces. Whose orders should the commander of the Odessa Military District obey, for example? Those of Marshal Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov or those of General Konstantin Morozov? The high command in Moscow or Kiev?

What advice should the military and the politicians be given in this connection? Let us consider first how to slim down this vast and costly state organism that is called the Army. Well, we do not need so many soldiers, officers, or generals nowadays. Next. Let us reduce the term of active service. Let us conclude contracts with professionals. Let us abolish the construction battalions in the former Union industrial ministries. In market conditions the employer should not expect a cheap (for which read—free) work force. Let us remove Russian soldiers from the areas of conflict, let us finally trust the national republics to resolve their own conflicts themselves. As with everything else they are better equipped to cope with them than any Moscow functionaries, even those of the highest rank.

It is not the Army's job to become embroiled in political quarrels. It is the Army's vocation to serve the fatherland. Which one? Ours, the one that we are building ourselves. For ourselves. And for our children. For our descendants. Let us take the oath to it with our hearts. An oath of loyalty to the last breath....

Commentary Assesses Army's 'Special' Role

PM1612114991 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 14 Dec 91 Union Edition p 10

["Editorial Viewpoint" commentary: "Army Demands Respect"]

[Text] Of all the collapsing state subdivisions of the former Union it seems there remains only one on which society can still rely. That is the Army. For a long time it has been threatened and continues to be threatened but the army's staunch refusal to give in to political passions is perhaps the last and only thing which is keeping the country from the most terrible and fatal thing for everyone....

An understanding of the Army's special role in our extraordinary social circumstances marks the actions of political leaders seeking to gain the support of the men with guns and to pay him respect. It is no accident that, as has now emerged, Marshal Ye. Shaposhnikov was informed of the decision of the Minsk troyka back on 8 December and acquainted with the text of the agreement. Just as it is no accident that M. Gorbachev recently took part in the conference of leading personnel of the USSR Armed Forces while B. Yeltsin met with the commanders of the categories of troops and the military districts and signed the decree on increasing their monetary maintenance.

How is the Army behaving? That question is now being asked not only by politicians but also by all those who have not yet lost their ability to think sanely and who realize how dangerous it is to issue a challenge to the military who are now experiencing professional, moral, and social upheavals from which they were reliably protected in the recent past. Thousands of officers who have left East Europe together with the troops are languishing without apartments and many also without work. Their families are living through a real life drama, aggravated here and there by political attacks on officers, undeserved rebukes and accusations against them, direct insults, and recently physical reprisals in some places. For instance, take a recent case (IZVESTIYA reported it): In central Tbilisi an armed attack occurred on Aviation Major General V. Glebov, first deputy commander of the independent Air Defense Army. The officers' meeting on the subject stated that weapons would be used against the bandits.

Where the firearms "polemics" between civilians and military could lead, what scales it will assume unless it is stopped before it is too late is, we hope, something that every sane person can imagine. Incidentally, this sober imagining should pervade some impatient politicians who are rashly demanding the immediate withdrawal, without due preparation, of Soviet military units from the territories of Georgia, the Baltic, and other independent states of the former Union. This thoughtless haste and in general the lack of ceremony in dealing with the military are extremely dangerous. Even the Army's restraint has its limits....

Respect for the Army is the minimal necessary condition for maintaining stability in the country. Ultimately against the background of state ruins and the collapse of political and economic relations, the Army is the only thing that still unites us.

Public Polled on Army, Political Situation

OW1612081591 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0737 GMT 16 Dec 91

[From the "Viewpoint" column; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A November opinion poll by the National Public Opinion Studies Center among 1600 respondents throughout the country, including 985 people in Russia, showed that 4 in 10 believe the Soviet Army should be single and subordinated to the interrepublic center. In Russia 54% of those questioned think so.

24% said each republic should have its own armed forces. (in Russia 13% of respondents).

22% think both single and republican armed forces are needed.

14% were undecided.

Margin of error—3%.

Most Respondents Say Political Situation in Former Union Republics Will Worsen

59% of participants in the same poll said that the political situation in the former Union republics is likely to worsen.

18% hope that it will improve.

23% were undecided.

Margin of error—3%.

Baltic Affairs

Complaint to UN Over Soviet Troop Presence

LD1512214791 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1830 GMT 15 Dec 91

[Text] The permanent representatives of the Baltic states at the United Nations have sent a letter to the secretary general, drawing his attention to the presence of Soviet troops in Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia. This document stresses that this is disturbing peace and security in the Baltic region. The letter has been distributed at UN Headquarters as an official Security Council document.

Republics Join European Free Trade Association

LD1312235391 Tallinn Estonian Radio in English 2130 GMT 11 Dec 91

[Text] Latvia, alongside the other two Baltic states Estonia and Lithuania, has joined the European Free Trade Association.

The signing of the documents took place in Geneva. Romania and Bulgaria have also joined the association at the same time.

Estonia

Prime Minister on Commonwealth Treaty, Money

OW1412025191 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1415 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Estonia's Prime Ministr Edgar Savisaar told journalists in Tallinn Thursday [12 December] that the agreement establishing the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS] obviously marked a "tactical step" that would most likely be followed by the conclusion of a "strategic treaty."

Mr. Savisaar expressed surprise at the CIS's readiness for compromise and noted that "as a CIS member Russia should no longer have any territorial claims to the Ukraine; the Ukraine has abandoned the idea of introducing a currency of its own; and the CIS capital will be based in Minsk, the present capital of Belarus that has always been neutral towards both the Ukraine and Russia."

According to Mr. Savisaar, the Commonwealth is bound to make the political situation more stable and give its peoples a feeling of greater confidence in their future.

The Estonian premier denied that his republic was planning to launch a monetary reform one of the these days, but promised that the reform would get under way within the next few months. He attached considerable significance to the introduction of Estonia's own currency, which he described as "a major step accompanying our secession from the Union."

Sees Danger of Military Coup

PM1312160691 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 13 Dec 91 First Edition p 2

["Extracts" from an interview with Estonian Prime Minister E. Savisaar by the Finnish newspaper HELSINGIN SANOMAT carried under the rubric "In the States of the Former Union": "Question and Answer"—place and date of interview not given]

[Text] [HELSINGIN SANOMAT] Don't you think it is dangerous that one-third of the population of Estonia will have their rights curtailed for many years as a consequence of the adoption of the draft law on citizenship?

[Savisaar] It is entirely feasible that the 100,000 representatives of the Russian-speaking population who voted for the republic's independence in the referendum together with Estonians will be granted the right to vote.

[HELSINGIN SANOMAT] Do you think that some Russians will leave Estonia?

[Savisaar] Undoubtedly, seeing that some people find it psychologically difficult to realize that they are no longer representatives of the ethnic majority. It is also possible that some Russian-speaking young people studying outside the republic will not return.

[HELSINGIN SANOMAT] Should UN troops be invited to Estonia, as Foreign Minister L. Meri has proposed?

[Savisaar] I hope that the situation will not deteriorate to the extent that we will have to appeal to the international community or the United Nations.

[HELSINGIN SANOMAT] How do you assess the situation in the Soviet Union?

[Savisaar] Sooner or later the transformations there will have to be implemented after the example of Peter the Great—by force.

The other possibility, a more dangerous one, is a military coup. The creation of officers' councils and committees, as well as attempts to nationalize army property in Moldova and the Caucasus, have led to such intensification of the contradictions in the Army that the possibility of a mutiny cannot be ruled out.

Latvia

Foreign Minister Comments on Commonwealth

LD1312194491 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0755 GMT 13 Dec 91

[By correspondents Vasiliy Golovnin and Vladimir Solntsev]

[Excerpts] Tokyo, 13 Dec (TASS)—Latvia looks optimistically and positively on the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States in place of the former USSR; however, for the present, it rules out the possibility of its

participation in the new formation, stated Latvian Foreign Minister Janis Jurkans in an interview with a TASS correspondent. He is in Japan on an unofficial visit in order to sound out the prospects for opening an embassy and for establishing economic contacts.

The development of the situation in the former USSR, he said, will clearly be moving in the direction of forming something like the European Community. However, in order to do this the republics in the first place need to create their own state structures. Jurkans expressed his satisfaction with the fact that the leaders of Russia and the Ukraine have shown sufficient flexibility and understanding of the importance of their dependence on each other. One cannot break up such an enormous state and remain within links, especially as we are united by a joint army and the ruble, regardless of what it may be like, noted the minister. He stressed that amicable relations are being formed between Russia and Latvia.

The West, stated Jurkans, should not be afraid of nuclear weapons in the collapsing USSR, or of an armed coup, in so much as August events have shown that the Army has no intention of firing on the people. It is worth being guarded about the state of the democratic process in Russia, which could become a genuine world catastrophe. Therefore, the minister stated, the West should help Russia to survive this winter and to prevent uncontrolled public demonstrations, which could be used by demagogues and those forces that have lost power but still dream of returning to it. [passage omitted]

Jurkans described the USSR Armed Forces upon its territory as the greatest issue for Latvia. I do not think, he noted, that the officers feel very good when they hear at meetings that you are the occupiers and you should get out of here. However, in the minister's view, a peaceful way out of this situation can still be found, having taken into account the fact that the Army should not simply be kicked out of the republic, because living people are involved, along with their families. Jurkans reported that at the present time talks about the withdrawal of the USSR Armed Forces are not taking place because for that to occur the situation in Moscow needs to stabilize. However, Latvia hopes, stated the minister, that the Army and the Russian and Ukrainian leaderships will show understanding on this issue.

Lithuania

Leader: Commonwealth Not 'New Slav Empire'

PM1312161491 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 11 Dec 91 Union Edition p 2

[Correspondent N. Lashkevich report: "Lithuania: Neighbors' Efforts Approved"]

[Text] Vilnius—"The Commonwealth of Independent States is not a new Slav empire," Vytautas Landsbergis, head of the Lithuanian parliament, stated at a meeting with a group of journalists at the Lithuanian Republic Supreme Council when answering questions on Lithuania's attitude toward the new association of Belarus, Russia, and the Ukraine.

"The Soviet Union ought to have been decolonialized anyway," he stressed. "The Commonwealth is an attempt by equal partners to maintain a certain stability. We shall see how events develop subsequently, but at the present moment, it is really very important to avoid conflicts between the three large states and reassure the world on nuclear weapons. This decision seems reasonable...."

V. Landsbergis drew attention to what he sees as the constructive position of B. Yeltsin, who is trying to hold the Union together and accordingly is adopting the optimum decisions based on the way things really are.

As for M. Gorbachev's new political role, V. Landsbergis did not rule out the possibility of attempts to restore the former situation, possibly by means of a coup. "Let us hope that this does not happen," he said. In his words it is quite likely that the new Commonwealth will need a central institution of power and a political figure to "fulfill central functions," but the main thing is that these functions of power should be determined from below.

Judging from V. Landsbergis' reaction, he does not see a threat to Lithuania from the Slav Commonwealth as the nucleus of a new association of independent states that could be joined by other sovereign republics too. Thus, despite a certain caution, the Lithuanian leader generally viewed this event positively. However, he made it quite clear that Lithuania is not going to take steps to join the newly formed association of states and will abide by its previous firm position of full independence.

Soviet Troop Withdrawal 'Impossible To Delay'

LD1512093791 Vilnius Radio Vilnius International Service in Lithuanian 0200 GMT 14 Dec 91

[Text] Soviet Defense Minister Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov today admitted that it is impossible to delay solutions to issues concerning the Army's withdrawal any longer and promised to send his authorized representative to Vilnius on 16 December. This was reported by the Lithuanian Government press bureau, reporting on a telephone conversation between Deputy Prime Minister Zigmas Vaisvila and the Soviet defense minister. Apart from the Soviet Army's withdrawal, issues concerning the arming of the Lithuanian border protection service were discussed. Kleymenov, deputy chief of staff of the Soviet Armed Forces, who arrives in Vilnius on 16 December, will be authorized to negotiate with the Lithuanian Government on forming a working group on the withdrawal of the Soviet Army and its work. The deputy chief of staff of the Soviet Armed Forces will also participate in a North Atlantic assembly seminar, which opens in Vilnius on 16 December. It was agreed that seminar participants will be able to visit the so-called northern

townlet—the Soviet military base in Vilnius. Representatives of approximately 30 countries will attend the seminar.

Sajudis Demands Troop Withdrawal by Year End

OW1412072791 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1715 GMT 14 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] In its statement "Sajudis" has urged Soviet officers and soldiers stationed on Lithuanian territory to leave the republic before the end of the year. "If you do not do that, on January 13th, 1992, the day of the first anniversary of the tragic events in Vilnius, "Sajudis" will incite all Lithuanian people.

"We understand that you do not want to leave since for 50 years you have been playing the master with impunity on our land. This way or that, gentlemen, you will have to do that. We would like to remain on good terms with you, since it is our fate to be neighbours. God bless you! Good luck!" the statement points out.

The Soviet Army servicemen stationed in Lithuania have sent a letter to Chairman of the Lithuanian parliament Vytautas Landsbergis in connection with the "Sajudis" statement. The letter says that the "Sajudis" ultimatum is intolerably insulting and contains clear threats to the military servicemen which may cause unpredictable consequences. "Mr. Landsbergis, the statement's menacing tone and your speeches have triggered a strong negative reaction of the officers and soldiers".

Soviet Troops To 'Disobey' Withdrawal Order

LD1412065891 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 0600 GMT 11 Dec 91

[Excerpt] There is a report by Virginijus Gaivenis in the newspaper RESPUBLIKA from the northern townlet military garrison deployed in Vilnius. The report includes an interview with the commander of the military unit, and it states that the servicemen have decided to disobey both the demands of the Lithuanian authorities and the orders of the military leadership and that they are not going to leave the territory they are currently occupying.

Meanwhile, the Soviet press predicts that in the near future the military will be instructed to withdraw from the capital cities of the three Baltic states. Such are international norms.

Information is available that indicates that the North Western Military Group has already received instructions from the USSR Defense Ministry to disband the Vilnius, Tallinn, and some other divisions. [passage omitted]

NATO Warns USSR Against 'Military Acitivity'

OW1612153391 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1330 GMT 16 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On December 16th in Vilnius a seminar of the Northern-Atlantic Assembly started on the issue of security for the countries in the Baltic region.

Mr. Simon Lund, NATO's deputy general secretary who is participating in the seminar, said in an interview with Lithuanian radio that he hoped the seminar participants will be able to develop principles for the concept on security in the Baltic region, "which will be acceptable to NATO, the Baltic countries and the USSR."

According to Mr. Lund, NATO entirely supports Lithuania's position in relation to the removal of Soviet troops from the republic. On this topic he stated that "the unstable situation in the USSR is dangerous not only for the Baltic countries, but for all of Europe." "We are in favor of a compromise on the issue," NATO's deputy general secretary said.

"Since Lithuania is an associate member of NATO," Mr. Lund thinks, "the USSR should consider this factor before planning any military activity by its contingent based on Lithuanian territory."

Government Warns Soviet Intelligence Unit

OW1412155691 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1330 GMT 14 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Lithuanian Government has warned the command of Soviet military unit N-71272 stationed near Kaunas to stop its "intelligence" activities.

The government's resolution on the issue says that if by December 19th the unit does not cease to exist, it "would be banned".

Currently, the unit is subordinated to the USSR Presidential Committee of Governmental Communication. Earlier, it belonged to the USSR KGB.

Interrepublic Affairs

Yeltsin Interviewed on Commonwealth Meeting

PM1412132391 Moscow TRUD in Russian
14 Dec 91 pp 1-2

[Interview with Russian President Boris Yeltsin by TRUD correspondents Yuriy Lepskiy and Aleksandr Potapov in Moscow; date of interview not given: "Boris Yeltsin: 'It Is Very Difficult For Us, But We Will Stand Our Ground'"—first paragraph is introduction]

[Text] In terms of the temperature of political events and their significance on people's lives, this week has been one of the most striking in the year now approaching its end. The editorial office telephones are constantly ringing; anxious readers are asking a host of questions—difficult ones sometimes. Many of these questions are answered by the president of Russia in conversation with TRUD's special correspondents.

[TRUD] Boris Nikolayevich, the first question is, all the same, to do with the results of the Minsk meeting. The unexpectedness of its results has generated many conflicting assessments, emotions, and even gloomy forecasts. What do you yourself believe: Do these results give grounds for optimism? Is this a way out of the deadlocked Novo-Ogarevo process?

[Yeltsin] At several sessions of the State Council in recent times I have repeatedly said: Ukraine's nonparticipation in the discussion of the treaty places us, Russia, in a situation whereby we too are unable to continue discussing it. Because without the Ukraine we do not represent the Union. First, it is a state with a colossal population—52 million people. Second, 11 million of these are Russians. Third, we are linked by a millennium of history and by thousands of economic, political, and social threads to this day. The nationwide referendum in Ukraine demonstrated that its people do not wish to be a part of any state whatsoever. And at Novo-Ogarevo we were talking precisely about a state, albeit a confederative one; we were talking about a state which would consist of sovereign republics.

It became clear that if Russia were to sign the treaty at Novo-Ogarevo, then our path and that of the Ukraine would diverge. We could not permit this, and so we began to look for a way out. An option was found. Admittedly, we did not advertise it at first, but nevertheless before going to Minsk I called President Gorbachev and told him of our intentions. We flew to Minsk in order to sign an economic agreement with Belarus for 1992. However, a most important task for us was to meet with the Ukraine's leaders, to elucidate their intentions and to endeavor to discuss the terms for the creation of a new community....

[TRUD] So what happened was not entirely unexpected for Gorbachev?

[Yeltsin] Of course not. Although the final document which was born in the Belovezhskaya forest is another matter. We did not agree on it with Gorbachev. We worked on it solidly for a day and a half, with the participation of the most experienced experts and consultants. And we emerged with precisely what is needed now. After all, what is worrying everyone most of all: Why have we lost eight republics out of 15 in the last few years? Because in a little over 70 years we all—including the mass media—have become very well aware of what the diktat of the center means, and that is why everyone fears like the devil the restoration of this diktat. And so when the republics saw that, verbally, the center is in favor of the republics' autonomy but in practice is retaining one, two, three, four, five Union ministries...and in addition is forming new structures of a "central" designation—well, then it became clear to everyone: The "radical" Novo-Ogarevo reforms are merely an attempt by the center to retain its influence in a different form. And when this was understood, the disintegration, the separation of the states began.

The process had to be "reversed." But how? There was only one way—to unite, but not within the framework of a single state but within a community of states. Just as, for example, the European countries are now doing. And thus was born the idea of the Commonwealth of Independent States. I repeat: It seems to me that the optimal variant has been found. First, it allows us to keep the existing borders and not redraw them or divide them. Second, it allows a single economic area and a single ruble system to be retained. Third, it allows a coordinated prices policy and strategy of further reforms. And, finally, we have thus been able to avoid the fragmentation of the army into republic segments. We are preserving as a unified system the command of the Air Defense Forces, the Air Forces, and strategic, tactical, nuclear armaments. A few days ago I met with the military, with all our generals. We spoke for two hours. And, briefly, there is understanding of our position. Incidentally, yesterday evening I also spoke with President Bush. We discussed the state of affairs in Russia. We exchanged opinions.

[TRUD] However, the nagging question remains. What will be the situation with Kazakhstan, on whose territory nuclear weapons are also based? President Nazarbayev was not invited to Minsk, and he has not yet signed the agreement on the Commonwealth of Independent States....

[Yeltsin] I understand. We had a preliminary talk with Nazarbayev. And we did not invite him to Minsk only because it was, first of all, necessary to elucidate Ukraine's position. And when we had talked with Ukraine and arrived at this agreement, I called Nazarbayev and related everything to him. He was prepared to fly to Belarus, but it transpired that the following day he was to take up his presidential post, followed immediately by a scheduled meeting with Gorbachev. He was

unable to cancel either one. But when President Nazarbayev had familiarized himself with the final document of the Minsk meeting, he said that in practice he was in agreement with everything with the exception, perhaps, of two or three points which, in his view, require amendment. We spoke with him again and agreed to meet in Alma-Ata within the next few days. I can tell you for sure—we will be talking about Kazakhstan's joining the Commonwealth. Possibly on particular conditions or with particular amendments to the agreement. Incidentally, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan have already announced their readiness to join the Commonwealth. As far as nuclear weapons are concerned, the opinion on the need for a joint command having jurisdiction over a single military-strategic area was unanimously confirmed in Minsk. Such a procedure extends also to nuclear weapons.

[TRUD] Does that mean that a nuclear-armed missile will not take off without the consent of all members of the Commonwealth?

[Yeltsin] Precisely.

[TRUD] We believe that this will reassure many people. However, there are grounds for other concerns. President Gorbachev, for instance, in connection with the disintegration of the Union, is warning virtually of the danger of civil war....

[Yeltsin] I hope that this is merely his first emotional response to the news from Minsk. In any case, two days later, at his meeting with the military, he was already speaking more calmy. He called the community of three states an element of a great and important process. In any event, I don't believe it's worth speaking of civil war. The results of the Minsk meeting cannot generate such a reaction in people. In a word, I believe that there can be no question either of civil war or of intervention on the part of the military. The reasons for a certain social tension remain, but they are of another sort—I am talking about people's deteriorating material situation, about the perplexity of many people in the face of abrupt and extremely tough transformations....

[TRUD] If you have no objection, let us turn to Gorbachev. He talks of the need to convene an emergency congress of people's deputies, of a nationwide referendum. What, in your opinion, might be Gorbachev's status within the framework of the new Commonwealth? Some people believe that his historical role is exhausted. What do you think on this score, and how are your relations taking shape in the new conditions?

[Yeltsin] We have met several times in these last few days. The first time was after my return from Minsk. Our conversation was courteous and correct, although the very drama of the meeting recalled the conversation of plaintiff and defendant in which the role of "defendant" was assigned to me. Later, it is true, the tone of our conversations changed. As for an emergency congress, this is hardly a fruitful idea. I doubt that representatives of the Commonwealth states will assemble at this congress. And without them the congress is no congress. A referendum is also pointless, I suppose. The decisions of the Commonwealth states' supreme soviets are sufficient in this respect. Understand that time is pitifully short. And so much priceless time has already been wasted, so much has been spent in discussions and consultations.... We should already be getting to work.

[TRUD] Okay. So, shall we move on to the economy, to the reform?

[Yeltsin] All right, although it is a no less complex topic.

[TRUD] Today it is already possible to state—without lying—that the economic reform in Russia is under way. We have finally and definitively cast ourselves off from the shore of "developed socialism," but we have ended up on the open sea in stormy weather. How do you yourself assess the degree of responsibility for the crew and passengers of our ship named "Russia"?

[Yeltsin] We should have been on this storm-tossed sea somewhat earlier—some six years ago. Look, by now the storm would have blown over and the ship would be under way. But what can you do. You yourself know what a struggle we have had to wage with the center so that Russia might pursue its reforms autonomously. But the pressure of an enormous bureaucratic blanket comprising 80 Union ministries obliged us to undertake a protracted trench warfare, under siege conditions. We were forced to move down the road of reforms taking very small steps. However, very small steps do not make reforms or a market economy. Poland and Brazil, for example, have already discovered this. By the way, the other day I met with a group of major economists from different countries whom we had specially invited to Moscow for consultations on questions of the reform. So, the general impression is that we are on the right path but we will not succeed by taking half-measures and tiny steps. What we need here is the courage of consistency—to see things through to the end regardless. I repeat, we have actually lost several years, but during these years no other outlets emerged for us. This is the right path. And we must go down it. Sooner or later.

Now the reform has begun. The new government has already made a number of fundamental decisions—in particular, on the social protection of the population, on stabilizing the economy, on taxes, and so on. The very near future will see the adoption of government decrees and instructions on privatization and accelerated land reform. These steps give us the opportunity to prepare ourselves for the beginning of next year, when the practical implementation of the reform will get directly under way. We are now experiencing what are perhaps the most complex days. Everyone is tired of waiting. Especially for the most painful measure—the liberalization of prices.

[TRUD] This measure is again being deferred....

[Yeltsin] Yes, that is so. The original date, 16 December, has had to be put back by two weeks, primarily because of the position of our Commonwealth partners. They pressed us to delay the liberalization a little. It has now been determined that prices will be "released" as of 2 January 1992. But in deferring this measure for two weeks we do nevertheless gain something. The main thing is that we will carry out the reform synchronously—certainly, as a minimum, with Ukraine and Belarus. There is a great hope that others will join. This means that we will be able to avoid acute economic conflicts, commodity blockades, cutoms barriers. We will be implementing the reform on the basis of strengthening relations with the republics, and not by means of "sorting each other out."

We are now faced with the fact that the trade network, the suppliers, and even the private operators are holding commodities back. Free prices are being introduced without prior arrangement [yavochnym poryadkom]. Of course, this upsets and irritates people, the last commodities at state prices are disappearing before their eyes. All this is graphically manifested in Moscow itself. Ask anyone, and you will hear a lot of harsh words on this topic. It is a difficult situation. But without releasing prices there is no way out. It is proposed to do this immediately on a whole range of goods. Prices will rise. But if we don't take such a step, we will continue to live as before in conditions of total shortage and a totally unjustified high cost of living. For some of the most important commodities we will retain regulated prices, although at a higher level than now. This primarily applies to bread, milk, kefir, cottage cheese, salt, sugar, vegetable oil, vodka, matches, medicines, apartment rents, municipal services, fuel, electricity, and other energy sources. We have begun the reform, indeed, as you have said, in conditions of an economic storm. But we have undertaken these actions in order to save ourselves from drowing. I have already said that, as distinct from human ailments, there are no incurable diseases in the economy.

Other countries have already experienced a similar situation—both our neighbors, Poland, Bulgaria, and such flourishing countries as Germany, South Korea, and Japan. And we derive confidence from the fact that these countries extricated themselves from a crisis no less profound than our own. The main thing is to withstand the most difficult and most crucial initial period, to get through these few months. If we do not fall apart, things will get easier. If we do not stand firm, they will become much more complicated. Courage and endurance are required not only of the population but also of the leadership at all levels, and above all the Government of Russia.

[TRUD] The reform, as you said, is beginning in extremely unfavorable conditions: outrageous prices, galloping inflation, real—not merely statistical—humiliating poverty.... What was the point of talking so much about social protection for people and postponing the changes on those grounds, only to find ourselves, at the beginning of the reform, still facing an absence of effective social protection? What lies behind this: Did people prepare badly or simply waste time or is it impossible in principle to avoid these negative phenomena? And what will happen next: Will things get worse, or will they actually get better?

[Yeltsin] I will start with your last point. The situation will develop approximately like this: First, it will get worse, then there will be stabilization, and in approximately a year's time we will see an improvement, albeit slow. A deterioration which has already been in progress for several years cannot be stopped instantly. The opportunity existed last fall, when it would have been possible to implement reforms at minimal cost to the population, when things were considerably better in the production sphere and as regards food supplies and we did not have the very acute financial crisis. I don't need to tell you now how that reform was blocked.

Since then, the potential that was then available to the state for providing social protection for people has become significantly more limited. And today there are only two alternatives—either go on waiting and watching the crisis get worse, until our potential for social protection is reduced to zero. Or start the reform and make the maximum use of the potential that does exist, ensuring support for the most unprotected section of the population. We have chosen the second path. Restrictions on wages have already been lifted in the production sphere. Wages are being almost doubled for workers in the budget-financed sphere, and social payments to pensioners, students, and the disabled are being increased considerably. Next year a law on indexation of incomes will come into force, that is to say, wages will be increased periodically depending on price increases. The main thing is that there will be new opportunities for people to earn money. To put it more simply, as is the case in the whole of the civilized world, we will pay people according to the quantity and quality of labor, with no restrictions whatever. But not even these steps will completely overcome or smooth over the difficulties of the first months of reforms. And we must tell people this honestly.

[TRUD] The trade unions are expressing displeasure because in a number of cases important decisions of a social nature are being made without them....

[Yeltsin] Yes, but we are trying to revive these contacts now. But also I don't think you can call for a strike every time a problem crops up. If we do that we will only make the situation worse. It is difficult enough already.

[TRUD] At the moment, in the extreme conditions of the transitional period, there is much talk of the possibility of a "putsch from below"—of social riots. How realistic are these predictions, in your view, and if they are realistic, what should be done to avoid such a situation?

[Yeltsin] Yes, people are talking about that a lot at the moment. Sometimes rather too insistently, even in a

frankly inflammatory way, if you ask me. And here there is no way we are counting on the Army or on the internal troops, God forbid. Only on working with people. Even if the mob takes to the street, you go to the mob, whatever kind of leader you are, you go to the mob, even if you are the president—you go and talk to people, explain to them what will happen tomorrow and the next day. Talk to people as often as possible through the mass media, explain what has happened, what changes there are. Through television, through the newspapers, including TRUD, which has the biggest mass circulation. In Russia today the situation is not the same everywhere. There are regions of high tension, where the situation is most serious. And that is where there is the greatest danger of social instability. That is where additional food supplies, including supplies from abroad, will be sent first and foremost. And the first of these special deliveries are already beginning. I am talking about Moscow, St. Petersburg, a number of major industrial regions. We will also resort to free handouts of food to those who are below the poverty line, those who are destitute. We will manipulate energy resources flexibly. We will strengthen local leadership, especially where there is patent anarchy in the organs of power. I am convinced that the most important condition of ensuring stability is to maintain links between states. I believe that in recent months, and especially in the last few days, the country has been on the brink of the precipice, but we stepped back from the brink at the last moment by concluding the agreement....

[TRUD] It is no secret that there is a migration of the Russian population from those republics that have proclaimed sovereignty. What is your attitude to this? How will the fate of the Russian population outside Russia be decided in future?

[Yeltsin] I agree, it is indeed an acute problem. What is happening in a number of republics today is causing great concern both among the Russians who live there and here in Russia too. Especially when you consider that there are more than 25 million of them. Artificial migration, or—more accurately speaking—people becoming refugees from injustice, oppression, and discrimination, whether covert or overt, is a disgrace first and foremost to the regions where it occurs. It grieves me to say it, but I cannot keep silent. Our approach to this problem is well known. We are opposed to the use of violence in interethnic relations. Any violence only exacerbates the position of Russians outside Russia and citizens of any nationality, and creates seats of long-term tension. Nobody gains from violence. The most important condition for resolving this problem is the establishment of the closest possible relations with the republics, on a bilateral and multilateral basis. When we conclude treaties we ensure without fail that they make provision for measures to protect the rights of Russians living in our partners' territory. Therefore I believe that the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States is of fundamental importance in resolving this problem too.

But for the time being, migration to Russia is taking place nonetheless. In this connection I recently signed a decree on organizing aid to refugees and forced migrants. To some extent it was necessary to finish the work that the Supreme Soviet had not yet done. A draft law on the subject is still on its way around the corridors there, its turn never seems to come. The decree envisages, first, holding talks with the republics on these questions by 1 April 1992. In particular, talks on the conditions and procedure for the resettlement in Russia of people who are forced to take this step. And the main question here is compensation from the republics for the housing and property that people leave behind. Emigration services are being set up in Russia's missions in the former Union republics to help people who want to return to Russia. Second, the government is instructed to give one-shot material and monetary aid to refugees and forced migrants within a month. An aid program is to be drawn up within two months.

[TRUD] Only recently, when you were in conflict with the center, you were upholding Russia's independence and sovereignty and supporting the national liberation struggle of the Baltic countries, Armenia.... Your position is different when national territorial formations within Russia make similar declarations. Is Yeltsin turning into Gorbachev here? What is it all about?

[Yeltsin] I have answered that question before. I will, therefore, only outline certain points of principle. We proceed from the premise that only the people themselves can determine the best form of existence for them. But it has to be the people. Therefore we supported the people's movements in the Baltic, Armenia, and other republics. And only recently we recognized Ukraine's independence, respecting its people's choice. At the same time we recognize the peoples' right to cooperation and collaboration, their desire to live together. This applies both to the peoples of Russia and to the peoples of those states of the former Union that have become independent. The main problem now is what form of such coexistence is possible. Previously they always tried to impose it from the center, thinking more about the center's fate than about the peoples and the republics. As a result the Union disintegrated. Today this process, stemming from the peoples of the republics, has found expression in the Commonwealth of three independent states. Similar endeavors are in progress in Russia. It is not a question of its disintegration, but of a new federation, one that is not coercive, but is created by the good will of the peoples. In other words, you have to be able to see clearly and accurately when you are looking at the people's will and when you are looking at the bureaucrats' well-disguised fear of losing their power and position. I try to distinguish between the two. And I act accordingly.

[TRUD] Boris Nikolayevich, we have all changed in many ways recently. Of course, there is such a thing as a sudden change, like seeing the light. But that is a rarity.

Everyone can see how you have changed. All the same, was something of today's Yeltsin already in existence back in Sverdlovsk?

[Yeltsin] The main thing was already there, I hope—the Urals steel. The people there are tough, exacting. They don't like blather, empty talk. I was raised in that atmosphere. That's certainly what makes me tick. But change is a continuous process in man. Time can only accelerate it or, conversely, slow it down. I was swept up in a maelstrom of events which obviously accelerated the process.

[TRUD] Imagine your life has turned out differently: You are still in Sverdlovsk. What would oblast leader Yeltsin think of President Yeltsin's reforms?

[Yeltsin] It is hard to answer that question without being disingenuous. Many of our qualities are not innate. Life "molds" us. What job you do, who your colleagues are—all this is significant. Who knows what Yeltsin would have been, if he had lived a different life.... All the same, I think I would have been a supporter, because it is not me that thinks up these reforms, life dictates them. Perhaps I would have been demanding greater dynamism and resolve, and the main thing is that if I were back in the oblast I would be acting autonomously, without waiting for instructions.

[TRUD] Portraits of Yeltsin hang in many offices now. Does this not embarrass you? Do you not find yourself thinking about the danger of creating new idols?

[Yeltsin] It doesn't embarrass me, it exasperates me. I am opposed to portraits in general. As you can see, I don't have any in my office. And then... I have ventured to take unpopular measures. Therefore,I don't think I can expect ardent affection from the Russians. On the contrary, there is growing criticism of me. So if portraits of me have sprung up in some places, then no doubt they will soon start tearing them down. I'm expecting that....

[TRUD] Boris Nikolayevich, a few personal questions, if you don't mind....

[Yeltsin] About privileges too, no doubt?...

[TRUD] Well, if you have no objection, we could start there.

[Yeltsin] What can I say? I don't think I have acquired any special privileges over the past year—but no—my bodyguard, by decision of the Supreme Soviet. But to be frank, a bodyguard is essential. This became clear particularly during the putsch. So what else, in my personal life.... I am probably sleeping even less. Not much more than four hours now. When I went to Minsk I had secret hopes of grabbing an hour to take a walk in the Belovezhskaya Forest, to have a look at the forest. No chance.... And in Moscow you know how it is: I spend all Saturday here at work, and half of Sunday too.

[TRUD] It would be interesting to know, what do you own personally? Have you privatized your apartment, for instance? Do not you think that a politician who has nothing is dependent on the state apparatus....

[Yeltsin] It is true, I have almost nothing of my own. In this sense presidents in the West must of course feel much freer than we do. But when it comes to the question of whose will I carry out, I'm sure you know what apparatchiks of every kind think of me. I don't think they regard me with much favor....

[TRUD] Difficult months lie ahead for you and for all of us. What can President Yeltsin promise TRUD's millions of readers, and how can TRUD's readers help President Yeltsin?

[Yeltsin] In a year's time, as I have said, we will stop "declining." The economy, finances, and living standards will stabilize. I can promise you that. Incidentally, this coincides with my election promises too. At that time I gave a date for stabilization—the end of 1992. International experts also consider this realistic.

What else.... I promise that by that time the Russian's "food basket" will be two-thirds full. No more, alas. But we will do everything to ensure it is no less than that. Without depending on galloping prices. The basket will not be full, but we will not permit famine. In a year's time we will have stabilized the economy and over the following five years we will gradually start improving living standards. Formerly, people were worried about the uncertainty. This uncertainty is coming to an end now. Therefore, as president, I say: We can see our goals, we know where we are going, and we are confident that we will achieve those goals. Now, how can TRUD's millions of readers help me.... I would say this: It is difficult for all of us now, and it is not going to get any easier in the next few months. The main thing is confidence. And faith. Do not give up, do not sink into pessimism, do not lose hope—that is the most important thing now. New times are on the way. Let us start learning to live in a new way, with initiative and good business sense. Every one of us is capable of resolving all his problems in life. The authorities' task is to ensure that no one and nothing stops people from doing so. If we can grasp that, together we will stand firm and succeed.

Khasbulatov 'Masterminded' Commonwealth Idea

LD1612125391 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 2213 GMT 11 Dec 91

[From the "Politics" section]

[Text] Ruslan Khasbulatov, chairperson, Russia's Supreme Soviet: It was I who first masterminded a community like UIS [Union of Independent States] at the Federation Council as far back as July last year. The chairperson of the Supreme Soviet of Russia Ruslan Khasbulatov, addressing a press conference in Vnukovo-2 VIP Airport upon his return from South Korea in the evening of 11 December, also expressed his confidence in the fact that the Russian parliament would ratify the

agreement to form a community of independent states. Khasbulatov pledged to exert every effort for it. Khasbulatov also spoke favourably of the idea to form a Slav community. In our hard times, he said, people naturally turn to their ethnic roots.

I just fail to understand the stand taken by Mikhail Gorbachev; life should have taught him that one cannot be guided by dogmatic old party-state approach, Ruslan Khasbulatov stated, having in mind Gorbachev's negative attitude to the Minsk accord of the leaders of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. Khasbulatov is against postponement of the freeing of prices.

Urges Aid Measures

LD1412150291 Moscow TASS in English 1442 GMT 14 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow December 14 TASS—The heads of the Russian Federation Soviets of People's Deputies assembled for a conference here today. Addressing the conference, Russian parliament leader Ruslan Khasbulatov said the Russian legislature, the president of the republic and his government were fully determined to impart a consistent and dynamic nature to reforms, the press centre of the Russian Supreme Soviet reports. Khasbulatov said the parliament would consider a package of important bills shortly. But he emphasised the adopted laws could not be successfully enacted without their understanding and wide support in provinces, without scrupulous compliance with the laws, state discipline and order. "Now that a Commonwealth of Independent States is being born, it is important to adopt measures to translate this idea into life, create an inter-state coordinating mechanism that would immediately begin accomplishing the specific tasks of the Commonwealth and define a legal base for its fully-fledged functioning," Khasbulatov said. "The need for this conference was prompted by the desire of the Russian leaders and the Supreme Soviet to consolidate ties with the heads of the elected bodies in provinces and vigorously to involve them in the work to create a legal base for socio-economic and political reforms and in the movement to form a democratic state," Khasbulatov said.

Yeltsin Adviser Says Gorbachev To Command Army

PM1312165091 Rome LA REPUBBLICA in Italian 12 Dec 91 p 3

[Alberto Flores d'Arcais report on 11 December remarks in Moscow by General Dmitriy Volkogonov, military adviser to Russian President Yeltsin: "'Gorbachev Will Become Armed Forces Chief'"]

[Excerpt] Moscow—"The most important thing is that there will be only one army with only one commander in chief. Will it be the defense minister? No, I think this task will be entrusted to Gorbachev himself." General Dmitriy Volkogonov had just left Yeltsin's meeting with the armed forces commanders—"pardon me for receiving you in uniform, but I really had to wear it today"—and seemed very pleased. Author of a biography of Stalin (to be followed by others of Trotskiy and Lenin), deputy to the Russian Soviet, and head of the committee in charge of the vast archives of the CPSU and the KGB, the general is Yeltsin's most heeded military adviser, and planned with the Russian president what was probably a crucial meeting for this country's future.

[LA REPUBBLICA] General, how did the meeting go?

[Volkogonov] Fine. The president explained to the military leaders the decision made in Brest and discussed with them problems relating to armed forces reform. After listening to him, the commanders stated their support for the establishment of the Slav community, in the belief that other republics will sign the agreement soon. Above all they realized the importance of Ukraine's membership. It was clear that the Kiev government would never have signed the union treaty desired by Gorbachev, and there can be no union without this republic—the most important and powerful after Russia.

[LA REPUBBLICA] Was Defense Minister Shaposhnikov there, too?

[Volkogonov] Yes he was there, and he too expressed his satisfaction with the agreement and the guarantees offered by the army.

[LA REPUBBLICA] What guarantees?

[Volkogonov] That there will remain a single army. There will be political coordination, a joint economy, and also a joint defense among the three republics. A military council will be formed—though I am not sure in what form and under what name; but that is unimportant—to collectively manage defense policy.

[LA REPUBBLICA] Who will head this council? Will there be a collective leadership with the defense minister as its coordinator?

[Volkogonov] There will be a general commander. No, I do not think it will be the present defense minister; the task could be entrusted to Mikhail Gorbachev himself. In any case, according to the constitution he is already head of the armed forces.

[LA REPUBBLICA] What if Gorbachev resigns as president?

[Volkogonov] Since the Union no longer exists, there is no apparent reason why there should still be a president. No, he will become the commander of the joint army.

[LA REPUBBLICA] So will he have full control of nuclear weapons?

[Volkogonov] Yes, the agreement envisages that nuclear weapons will remain under a single command and that there will be a single strategic military dimension.

Nuclear bombs will be controlled by the Defense Council and the black attache case will be in the hands of this council's commander.

[LA REPUBBLICA] What if Gorbachev does not accept?

[Volkogonov] I think he will accept. The kind of union he wanted is no longer possible. Other republics will join the Slav community and I think that in the coming years there will also be another trend toward the center. The important thing is that the center as it has been envisaged hitherto be buried once and for all.

[LA REPUBBLICA] Are there divergences within the army?

[Volkogonov] No, the army is compact; the commanders are all agreed in regarding the accord signed in Brest as the only possible solution.

[LA REPUBBLICA] Why, then, was Lobov dismissed, followed by two deputy defense ministers?

[Volkogonov] After the August coup all the deputy defense ministers were dismissed. Only these two were left. This does not mean that they are accused of connivance with the putschists, but in the past three months the armed forces leaderships have been completely restructured, and this is a normal reshuffle. As for Lobov, I think there are no charges; Defense Minister Shaposhnikov has renewed his entire team and has put a trusted person in charge of the general staff.

[LA REPUBBLICA] So was Lobov not torpedoed on Gorbachev's orders?

[Volkogonov] No, I think he learned of the decision from the minister and simply ratified it. You in the West think that there are tensions and divergences in the army, but I repeat: The Red Army is united.

[LA REPUBBLICA] But there are divergences in the Russian parliament, which is due to ratify the Brest agreement this morning. Do you think it will approve Yeltsin's proposal?

[Volkogonov] There will certainly be a major debate. Some deputies are against it, but I am 100 percent sure that it will be approved in the end. [passage omitted]

Rutskoy on Commonwealth Nuclear Arms Control

PM1612143191 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 14 Dec 91 p 2

[Yu. Moskovskiy report: "To Investigate the Situation"]

[Text] Russian Vice President A. Rutskoy has addressed a congress of young political leaders, which was held in Moscow recently.

"It is empty store shelves, not ideas, that now determine the state of the masses, who are tired of political intrigue," he declared.

The vice president disagreed that the union between the RSFSR, the Ukraine, and Belarus, signed by the three presidents, is a "union of Slav states," because Russia, he said, has never been purely Slav.

A. Rutskoy would like neither nuclear weapons nor the Army to be divided up but to be under the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth.

"The present government of Russia will be unable to satisfy the people," the vice president said, "if only because there is no program of reforms in the sphere of production but merely in the sphere of mediation—which long ago exceeded all reasonable limits. It is necessary to stop, to end the issuing of all sorts of decrees, and to investigate the situation which has taken shape, otherwise we will not emerge without a scandal."

Among the other questions put to the vice president there was one about Artem Tarasov as the new politicians' representative. The general replied with all his straightforwardness that he is, rather, a representative of business people and that the prosecutor's office will probably investigate the way Artem handled the "Harvest-90" checks soon.

Burbulis Views Possible Commonwealth Structures

LD1512031791 Moscow TASS in English 1733 GMT 14 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Igor Kuleshov]

[Text] Paris December 14 TASS—Russia must have its own representatives in the international organisations. There should be both Russian and the new commonwealth representatives in U.N., Russian First Deputy Prime Minister Gennadiy Burbulis said in an interview with LE FIGARO correspondent.

Burbulis said the following structure is most likely to take shape in the commonwealth: council of heads of state, council of heads of government and a special body to adjust parliament decisions. Burbulis did not rule out the possibility of creating a flexible centre, where heads of state would take turns as coordinators.

"There are objective laws of history, which cannot be ignored. To understand and foresee them one must be an outstanding person. Gorbachev could apply his talents in the new structures, but now this does not depend on him alone", Burbulis said, describing Gorbachev's possible role in the new commonwealth.

"To overcome the communist disorder we must pass several stages. One of these is the Minsk treaty which will help us to recover.

"We believe all the former Soviet republics must confirm their adherence to unified strategic realm. This is true about the Navy, the Air Force and the strategic nuclear arms. They must all be under united headquarters and under joint control at the same time. The Army

will be of mixed character with national armed forces prevailing in number over the federal troops.

"No experience exists of abandoning a totalitarian communism and altering it for a market economy. Property issue is the most important one. We can now be compared with chess players whose next moves are determined by the previous", Burbulis said.

Kozyrev Comments

LD1512125991 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1900 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Interview with Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev by unidentified correspondent after Kozyrev received "ambassadors of the West's leading countries" on the Commonwealth of Independent States document in Moscow on 9 December; from the "TV Inform" program—recorded]

[Text] [Correspondent] Is there any reaction from foreign states to yesterday's document?

[Kozyrev] There is positive reaction in the sense that, as I understand it, they can see that something real has appeared, not just agreements, conversations, etc. Second, they can see that we are not allowing ourselves to be intimidated to death. I think that perhaps in the recent period and especially over the last few days, they have simply let themselves be intimidated to death—collapse, disintegration, virtually a division of nuclear weapons, etc. At last, they have received a coherent document and, moreover, a document that has already been signed, that has already been agreed. It is not sometime, somewhere, it will be agreed by someone, endlessly trying to agree on new things, etc.; it is already a document which answers all these questions—open borders, human rights, economic cooperation of the closest kind—incidentally, even closer than in the preceding documents, the so-called union documents—and unity of nuclear and strategic space.

North Ossetia Welcomes Commonwealth Agreement

LD1312164491 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1417 GMT 13 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Valeriy Shanayev]

[Text] Vladikavkaz, 13 Dec (TASS)—"At this historical time and confirming the North Ossetian people's will concerning its indissoluble unity with Russia, the North Ossetian Soviet Socialist Republic's [SSR] Supreme Soviet Presidium and Council of Ministers support the agreement of the heads of states of Belarus, the RSFSR, and the Ukraine signed in Brest, as a real step toward establishing a Commonwealth of Independent States and toward restoring the Union upon a new foundation," states a telegram from Akhsarbek Galazov, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the North Ossetian SSR, and Sergey Khetagurov, chairman of the Council of Ministers of North Ossetia. The telegram was sent today to RSFSR President Boris Yeltsin and Ruslan Khasbulatov, chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet.

North Ossetia, which is a constituent part of the Russian Federation, and its people, notes the telegram, will do everything necessary so that the principles laid down in the agreement will be implemented and so that the processes of unification in the political, socioeconomic, and other areas will serve the good of the people, the vital interests of peace, and mutually advantageous cooperation.

Supreme Soviet

Proceedings Reported From 13 Dec Session

LD1312222491

[Editorial Report] Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian at 2025 GMT on 13 December broadcast a recording of the 13 December proceedings of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet session held in Moscow.

The recording began with the presenter summarizing today's proceedings. The deputies discusssed amendments to a package of draft laws on taxation and then measures connected with protecting the environment. The law on environmental protection was set aside without voting because it was considered that insufficient work had been done on it. Another issue was discussed at the end of the sitting, the presenter said. At this point the recording switched to the recording of the actual proceedings.

Khasbulatov introduced the discussion on the RSFSR law on amendments to the code on administrative violations of the law. The hall was practically empty.

An unidentified deputy proposed an indexation of penalties. Deputy (?Delashov) asked whether penalties will also apply to adolescents and children. An unidentified deputy explained the details of the penalties.

At 2028 GMT Deputy (?Petukhov) said that personal transport has been omitted from the penalties law and proposes that it should be taxed. An unidentified deputy presenting the penalties law made a point about the level of penalties.

Deputy Yakunin stated that under inflationary conditions there should not be specific sums for penalties. Deputy Travnikov stressed the importance of protecting the metro.

An unidentified deputy spoke about the necessity of expanding the scope of the resoultions. An unidentified deputy presenting the law explained its contents.

At 2034 GMT a vote was taken on whether to adopt the law. The result was 83 for, two against, and no abstentions. The law was adopted.

At 2035 GMT the recording ended.

All Republics Invited To Join Commonwealth

LD1312192391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1810 GMT 13 Dec 91

["Statement by the RSFSR Supreme Soviet"—TASS headline]

[Text] [no dateline as received] On 8 December 1991, the leaders of Belarus, Russia, and the Ukraine signed an agreement on creating the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Certain political forces, using part of the mass media and having organized a single-minded demagogic campaign, are attempting to portray this agreement to the world public as a "Slav union," which allegedly is directed against either the Central Asian or the Muslim republics and states.

We people's deputies of the Russian Federation—a great Eurasian state that incorporates representatives of many nationalities professing Christian, Islamic, Buddhist, and other religions—are confident that attempts at such an interpretation of the very spirit of the agreement are extremely dangerous politically and are unsubstantiated. We categorically refute them.

We state that the Russian Federation always has built and will continue to build its relations with other independent states (and not only the former republics of the USSR) on the basis of friendship, good-neighborliness, and mutually advantageous cooperation, guaranteeing on its territory all of the rights and freedoms of citizens of the various nationalities and denominations which are universally recognized by international norms.

A commonwealth of equals, in the name of life, on the basis of recognition of the specific interests of the peoples and states in our multiethnic country—this is the political formula which is proposed by the agreement on the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

We are sure that this historic step on the path toward attaining normal relations among peoples, republics, and independent states is the real path toward implementing deep-reaching economic reforms in the interests of our peoples.

We call upon all peoples and governments of the former republics of the USSR to join our commonwealth.

Moscow, House of the Soviets, RSFSR, 12 December 1991

Kozyrev Addresses Supreme Soviet on S. Ossetia

LD1612134191 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 2200 GMT 16 Dec 91

[Text] The RSFSR Supreme Soviet continued to discuss issues connected to the situation in S. Ossetia on 12 December. As Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev reported, Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia has told him that Georgia is prepared to cooperate with Russia on the question of resolving the problem of S. Ossetia. According to Kozarev, Gamsakhurdia is against establishing S. Ossetia as a state.

Federation Affairs

Yeltsin Appoints Sergey Shakhray Vice Premier

OW1412185991 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1700 GMT 14 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] President of Russia Boris Yeltsin has appointed state adviser, Sergey Shakhray, vice-chairman of the Russian government. He will be in charge of state and legal policies during the period of economic restructuring. Besides that, according to Boris Yeltsin's decree, Sergey Shakhray will supervise the Ministries of Internal Affairs and Justice, the State Committee for Nationalities Policies and the Federal Security Agency.

Boris Yeltsin has also set up the Russian President's State and Legal Department which will prepare the president's decisions, including the ones on citizenship, pardon and awards.

Prices Expected To Increase 100-150 Percent

LD1412214191 Moscow TASS in English 2120 GMT 14 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Gennady Talalayev]

[Text] Moscow December 14 TASS—According to forecasts, the growth of prices in Russia after they are released on January 1 will reach 100 to 150 per cent during the first month of 1992, but beginning with February-March the prices are to go down perceptibly, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Yegor Gaydar said today, addressing a conference of leaders of the republican, regional and district councils of people's deputies.

Speaking about budget plans for 1992, Gaydar pointed out that the government was facing an extremely difficult task: to reduce the expenditures, which amount now to 65 per cent of the gross national product, and bring them to 46 per cent. The first thing to do will be to reduce subsidies which account for 14 per cent of the GNP and are applied mostly to food.

It is also planned to cut defence spendings. Fire arms, ammunition, tanks, armoured vehicles and fighter planes will not be bought for the army next year.

Oil production will be given top priority, Gaydar continued. There are conditions for reducing the pace of the decline of oil production in 1992 and, perhaps, for stabilising it.

Touching upon foreign economic activities, the deputy prime minister admitted that the situation was

extremely difficult, because Vneshekonombank was bankrupt. Two days ago there were only about 60 million dollars left in its accounts. In this situation we have to rely on foreign credits, in the first place, Gaydar said. Hard currency is now being spent only on the charter of ships for the transportation of purchased grain and food, and on the purchase of raw materials for the chemical and light industries.

According to Gaydar, on January 1 the government will lift many administrative barriers on the way of the expansion of foreign economic relations and will encourage exports.

Military Plants Seen Undermining Conversion

PM1512143191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 6 Dec 91 Union Edition p 2

[S. Leskov report: "It Seems the Military Industry Is Preparing Its Revenge"]

[Text] Commenting on the statement made by Russian Vice President A. Rutskoy during his trip around Altay, IZVESTIYA conjectured that Aleksandr Vladimirovich had gotten worked up. Indeed, we formed the impression that his emotional speeches about the need to support the defense complex with substantial state orders and the dire consequences of the resolute turn toward the market were prompted by the enterprise leaders who had escorted their distinguished guest around the workless workshops. Thus an understandable human sympathy had arisen while considerations of economic expediency took a back seat.

After the commentary was published, an extremely curious document turned up at the editorial office—a document which gives grounds for believing that the vice president's statements that caused such a fuss were not a chance episode but a reflection of the antimarket sentiments of certain circles in Russia's corridors of power. These sentiments are expressed by representatives of the military-industrial complex, who are carrying more and more weight in the White House. A Committee for Conversion Affairs headed by M. Bazhenov, who worked for many years within the military-industrial complex, was established recently under the RSFSR president. A "statute" on the new committee drawn up in a matter of days is now being sent out to defense complex ministries. The very speed with which the statute was prepared shows that the ideas contained in it have already been sufficiently road-tested and verified by practical experience.

When you look at this document, you get the impression that you are reading a circular worthy of the period of stagnation, which was such a glorious time in the life of the defense complex. The newly formed committee intends to "formulate and implement effective methods of state control and coordination of conversion processes." It emerges from the lengthy text that the committee intends to embrace the entire defense complex in the strictest administrative discipline and to control every step that enterprises take, completely rejecting even feeble impulses toward autonomy. The production of peaceful products is mentioned in passing, but the emphasis is on developing arms "at a qualitatively new level" and on further militarizing an economy that is already collapsing under the burden of military orders.

"It is perfectly obvious that these plans sharply contradict the RSFSR president's course toward profound market reforms," Academician V. Avduyevskiy, chairman of the Soviet National Commission for Promoting Conversion, believes. "An attempt is basically being made to revive the Military-Industrial Commission, and moreover in a worse form that is doomed from the outset since the mechanism of centralized bureaucracy set up in former years has been irrevocably destroyed."

We have been talking about conversion for three years now. Bearing in mind the enormous capacities of the defense complex (up to 80 percent, for example, of the machine building complex) and the concentration within it of all the best things that constitute our country's wealth, conversion was rightly considered the main hope of getting out of the crisis. However, it is evident from the shelves in the stores that not only are goods not available in greater quantity, but even those goods that the defense complex used to give us—televisions, refrigerators, and sewing machines—have vanished like spring snow. Out of 120 new types of product planned for assimilation by defense enterprises last year, production of only 23 has been organized and a mere five meet international quality standards. We ought not even to mention this year. In order somehow to have something to report, the monopolist producer inflates consumer goods prices and passes off as conversion things that the military have rejected as unnecessary. This is what happened, for example, with the unfinished "Buran," which had already swallowed 20 billion [currency not specified] but gave absolutely nothing to the ordinary citizen or, it turned out, to its clients from the Defense Ministry.

Why then did conversion not come up to our expectations? Because an armored train is not a taxi; it only runs on rails. Defense enterprises were tasked with conversion but military orders were not reduced and the enterprises were not removed from military-industrial complex jurisdiction. The fact of the matter is that mass consumer goods and the task of surviving in market conditions are organically alien to the defense complex. The defense complex has gotten used to living on the profitable state order, not counting its pennies, obtaining raw materials for a pittance, and basically not experiencing any competition.

You know, many specialists foresaw this turn of events. At conferences at the highest level Academician V. Avduyevskiy, USSR Deputy Foreign Minister V. Karpov, and other specialists have frequently proposed transferring 400-500 military enterprises to the civil

sector, which would raise its standard and create competitive conditions at a stroke. In the opinion of V. Zanin, general director of "Signal," the largest production association in St. Petersburg, three-quarters of defense enterprises could switch to peaceful production without special expenditure. All this would take is an end to orders for military hardware. Incidentally, a number of studies by Western economists demonstrate that as regards all efficiency indicators (labor productivity, return on capital, materials-intensiveness), military production is inferior to civil production.

A promising conversion trend was thought to be international cooperation among defense complex enterprises. Right now, for example, the Krasnoyarsk Applied Mechanics Science and Production Association (general director Academician M. Reshetnev) is actively developing contacts with the most developed countries. Very big contracts are being planned, but won't these be ruined by the new committee, which is assuming the functions of "negotiating and concluding agreements with foreign companies"? We know all about the center's skill when it comes to trade.

Even in the event of a drastic reduction of orders, the military-industrial complex did not want to voluntarily curtail its sphere of influence. The defense complex has not given the peaceful sector a single plant or a single scientific research institute, thus keeping alive the possibility that the reverse process—reconversion—might take place. Let production facilities stand idle for want of military orders, as long as they remain ours! Has the military-industrial complex bided its time, and is reconversion now beginning?

No, objective economic laws and the whole of world experience demonstrate that conversion under diktat conditions is doomed. The document prepared by the Committee on Conversion Affairs only disorients enterprise leaders who have learned to count their pennies, who have sought profitable orders, and who have begun to show some autonomy. All the same, life will prevail, and there is no reason to turn the economy back to the past, however nostalgic officials who linked their future to the military-industrial complex may feel.

There is nothing surprising about the failure of conversion. After all, a good half of the SCSE [State Committee for the State of Emergency] members were among the inspirers of this poor bureaucratic option which has unsuccessfully implanted itself in the national economy. It turns out that even G. Yanayev was deputy chairman of the Soviet National Commission for Promoting Conversion. This is why Academician V. Avduyevskiy, describing the newborn document, says it should be sent off for signing to the "Sailors' Rest" jail [where the putschists are incarcerated].

Banks Not To Freeze Enterprise Accounts

OW1412023691 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1650 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russian authorities have stated that no enterprises' accounts with banks in the RSFSR will be frozen. Denying rumors to this effect, the Russian parliament's press center emphasized that in reference to the Central Bank of the RSFSR, any such freezing of accounts not only has not been planned, but would not be allowed.

Vice Premier Says Foreign Trade Bank Bankrupt

OW1412180591 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1444 GMT 14 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Vice-Premier of the Russian government, Mr. Yegor Gaydar has described the USSR Vnesheconombank, the country's central bank for foreign trade, as bankrupt. He said that its real current left-over, as of December 12, amounted to about 60 million hard-currency rubles. Mr. Gaydar said that it was a debtor not only to the West, but also to industrial enterprises and republics, including Russia.

Vnesheconombank, "practically run out of money", that the West has stopped giving loans to it and that the republics do not transfer their hard currency to it. Vnesheconombank has refused to answer the question about the possibility of announcing its bankruptcy officially.

Addressing the leaders of the supreme councils of the republics constituting the Russian Federation and representatives of the autonomous entities, Mr. Gaydar also said the Russian Government was auditing the loans given to the former central bodies of the USSR. He said that Russia had sharply cut down hard-currency spending, channelling it exclusively to importing food, spare parts and units for chemical and light industry, and to freight payments.

In the Russian Government's estimate, in January, shortly after price liberalisation, retail prices will rise by 100 to 150 percent. However, in February, prices may "slightly go down", Mr. Gaydar said.

He also noted that the government was to accomplish to vitally important tasks to make price liberalisation "at least partially acceptable" socially, to stabilize the financial system and stop hyper-inflation.

Central Bank Prohibits Hard Currency Abroad

LD1612143291 Moscow TASS in English 1408 GMT 16 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Nikita Marunov]

[Text] Moscow December 16 TASS—The Russian Central Bank has issued a resolution prohibiting enterprises

from keeping their hard currency funds outside the Republic, Dmitriy Tulin, bank chairman, told TASS.

He said the move was prompted by recent publications that many enterprises and organisations transfer hard currency to foreign banks, which hampers control over companies' currency payments to the state.

He stressed that further currency transfers will have to be authorised by the Central Bank of Russia. Enterprises will be allowed to keep hard currency at any commercial bank licensed to conduct operations with hard currency.

Tulin said the Russian Government plans to adopt a resolution this December to establish the procedure for forming Russian's hard currency reserve and determine the amount of currency to be paid by enterprises in 1992.

The reserve will be used to finance imports of prime necessities and other staples to Russia.

Tulin also said processing enterprises may enjoy certain privileges.

The chairman stressed the need to develop close contacts between agencies exercising hard currency control and customs bodies. The government may also set up a special controlling body to this end.

Yegor Gaydar Interviewed on Economic Reform

LD1612055691 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1950 GMT 15 Dec 91

[Interview with RSFSR Vice Prime Minister Yegor Gaydar by Nikolay Svanidze; place and date not given; from the "Facing Russia" program—live or recorded]

[Text] [Svanidze] Hello. We are continuing our meetings with the leaders of the Russian Government. Today we are talking with Russian Vice Prime Minister Yegor Gaydar, the man directly responsible for implementing economic reform. Yegor Timurovich, what kind of week has it been for the country, for Russia, and what kind of week has it been for the Russian Government?

[Gaydar] It has been a difficult week for the country. There have been a lot of unpleasant incidents, unpleasant events that make an already difficult situation more complicated. This is the background against which one has to implement economic reform—it does not take place in a vacuum.

Economic reforms do not cancel and cannot clear up the very difficult situation that has arisen with heating supplies in Khabarovsk. This week the government decided to allocate from state reserves the resources necessary to stabilize the situation there and put the situation right. The power utilities in Khabarovsk refused our offer; they refused to receive an operational group from the Russian Government that would have been able to try to help organize repair work on the spot. They said they did not need this but that they need resources. I think that is a fully understandable position.

Then there are a lot of specific problems that the Russian Government has to deal with every day. These problems are of various kinds, in various industries, and in various regions. Behind these specific, very acute, often very tough problems, one must not forget the main thing: one must not forget the strategy for getting out of the crisis, the preparation of economic reform, and the working out of the basic measures that will make it possible for us to change the situation radically.

[Svanidze] This reform, Yegor Timurovich, currently gives rise to mixed feelings—both hope and fear. Like most television viewers, I am no economist and I try to set out the main arguments of your opponents at the common sense level. Price liberalization and freeing prices will lower the population's purchasing ability and will hit people in the pocketbook. Social protection measures will ease the blow but they will not be able to neutralize it. The shop counters have to be filled with goods, but where are they to come from with the effective continuation of monopoly production, which is being preserved because privatization is a lengthy process. My question for you, therefore, is this: How does the government intend to remove the shock? Why are you confident that there will be goods in the shops?

[Gaydar] At the moment, the entire distribution network is completely paralyzed. There is not much grain in the country, but there is some. Nobody wants to sell it until the price is acceptable to the seller. The meat situation is complicated, but meat supplies are not smaller than those on the same date last year—they are slightly higher. Nobody delivers meat anywhere until prices are acceptable. The situation is the same for many consumer goods—passenger cars, refrigerators, television sets—the warehouses are full. Today, when the administrative system already does not work at all, it is not possible to force anyone to sell for a price that is not profitable. What we need are incentives. Therefore, if the old regulating mechanism has collapsed, a new one should be created. Of course, it would be better to create it slowly, gradually, step-by-step.

The first step would be to stabilize finances, having created a competitive production network, etc., but we should understand that we no longer have this choice. The old mechanism has collapsed. Now, each day of delay is a day of additional heavy hardship for all of us; the hardship that should be cut down, reduced, smoothed out. This could be done today through only one method: through the activation of the market mechanism, which solves such problems throughout the whole world.

Of course, the first days and weeks after freeing prices are the most frightening. I know that the most difficult weeks for my colleague Polish Finance Minister Leszek Balcerowicz were the first two weeks in January 1990 when the already freed prices were sky-rocketing but the goods had not yet appeared in the shops. In three weeks the market began to work and they did appear because

the market is a stable, self-regulating system that is capable of solving the problem of eliminating shortages.

Yes, prices will be high. Yes, there will be a serious social price to pay. But if you cannot force the goods to move you have only one choice—you should provide the incentive. Bulgarians have been freeing prices since the beginning of this year. Their situation was no better than ours: a complete absence of goods, no currency reserves, a monopolistic production structure, a monopolistic economic structure. Again, the first weeks were the hardest: rapid price increases and shortages of goods for several weeks. Then the situation changes; it reaches the breaking point and for the first time a serious problem emerges—there is an excess of produce. It is difficult to imagine this now; it is difficult to believe. If we are being strict with our budget, if we do not allow ourselves to be frightened by the threats of social problems and by social demagogy, if we do not let our budget fall apart, if we are able to slow down the money-printing machine, then there is no doubt that by switching on the market mechanisms it will be possible to overcome the shortages efficiently.

[Svanidze] Yegor Timurovich, you do not fit the usual image of one of our vice prime ministers, both in terms of your age and in terms of your background—you are an academic scientist. I certainly do not believe economic reform should necessarily be headed by someone over 70 who has spent 60 years as director of a defense plant—that is not the point. The fact is that the country is not an experimental laboratory. It consists of tired and embittered people. Clearly time is now the main opponent of the Russian Government. Are you keeping your eye on the clock? What timeframe do you need according to your calculations to bring the economy out of its dive?

[Gaydar] In order to bring the economy out of its dive, in order to set the market mechanisms in motion, to overcome the shortage of goods on the consumer market, to overcome the shortage of the means of production, and in order to slow inflation, without a doubt seven to eight months are sufficient, provided that the resolve is there.

[Svanidze] The timeframe given by Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin.

[Gaydar] Yes. This does not mean that someone believes that we shall start having economic prosperity in seven or eight months. It would be unprofessional and irresponsible to promise anything at all of that kind. In seven to eight months beyond any doubt whatsoever the volume of production in our country will be even lower than it is today. We are going to have to cut down production sharply in a whole range of industries, first and foremost the defense industry, the investment system, and the building industry because of commodity and financial restrictions.

Serious problems are going to arise in the employment field. That is inevitable; it is also inevitable that it will remain after seven to eight months for the next year to year and a half at least. That is quite a serious problem, but during the course of seven to eight months it is possible to achieve the main thing: it is possible to form the market foundation upon which it will be able to build a normal, civilized economy and from which it will be possible later to start the rehabilitation of the national economy. This is realistic; it is possible. Success here depends upon just one thing: the progress of coordination of the actions of the republics as well as the ability to be extremely precise and extremely tough in financial and economic regulation.

[Svanidze] What is your opinion as an economist and politician: Will history give you these seven or eight months?

[Gaydar] I think it will. I hope it will. I am sure that the feeling of responsibility and recognition of the real situation in which we all find ourselves will get the upper hand. One simply has to have a sober idea of what is meant today by falling into the abyss of inflation. That would be the degradation of all state institutions. That would be the collapse of the system of regulation that inevitably embraces the whole of society. That would be a serious prerequisite for a radical political coup. That would be almost inevitably the prerequisite for financial order, which is going to be imposed in any event in this country—financial anarchy never lasts forever, someone will impose financial order—that would almost inevitably be the prequisite for this financial order being imposed in an undemocratic way.

[Svanidze] What was the attitude of the world community to the Minsk agreement? How will this be reflected in the practical credits and aid from the West?

[Gaydar] At the present time the reaction is extremely positive—one might say it is exceeding all expectations. Our delegation has just returned following negotiations in the European Community. Agreements for food credits and for food aid have been reached, which are very important for us today with the present food situation. The main thing is that we are managing to get closer to solving the highly important problems for us of restructuring the whole system of our relations with the West. Hitherto our hands have been tied by Union relations and Union liabilities in the distribution of credits. Credits have traditionally been distributed by the center. Recently they were distributed by the Interstate Economic Committee. This has been the cause of the enormous imbalance between Russia's imports and exports.

We have now been able to establish the essential requirements to take upon ourselves in precise terms the management of Russian credits, to tie them to our real exports; that is, if we pay these credits, if we guarantee deliveries of oil and oil products, then naturally we will provide the substance of these credits and distribute them. We have reached such agreements with republics and what we managed to achieve last week was the

recognition of the new realities by the world community, including the European Community.

[Svanidze] A different type of question: Your grandfather, Arkadiy Gaydar—incidentally he is my favorite children's writer—created his own unique world that he populated with his own heroes. You are living in totally different times and in a new and tougher real world. Who is your favorite children's writer?

[Gaydar] Arkadiy Gaydar.

[Svanidze] Thank you for the interview. All the best. Goodbye.

Yeltsin Aide Cited on Soviet External Debt

PM1312135191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 10 Dec 91 Union Edition p 2

[M. Berger report: "Russia Will Not Pay Debts Incurred Without its Consent. Announcement by Petr Aven, Head of the Russian Committee for Foreign Economic Relations, in conversation with IZVESTIYA"]

[Text] A document of fundamental importance was signed at last week's session of the heads of government of Economic Community member states—a treaty on succession with respect to the USSR's external state debt and assets. The statutes of the Interstate Council for Monitoring the Servicing of Debts and the Utilization of Assets were also approved. It was decided that the USSR Vneshekonombank [Bank for Foreign Economic Activity] will function under the Interstate Council's control and management.

On behalf of and at the behest of the Council of Heads of Government, the Interstate Council issued a statement informing all creditors of our difficult economic situation and the measures being taken to resolve the crisis situation. The statement also says that our side highly values the aid from foreign governments and the understanding shown by creditors.

In a conversation with IZVESTIYA, Petr Aven, chairman of the RSFSR Committee for Foreign Economic Relations, said: "We have signed a treaty, and there are no grounds to doubt that Russia recognizes its responsibility for repaying the USSR's external debt and is prepared to share it on a proportionate basis with other former Union republics which are now sovereign states. New credits are a different matter. At present, talks are under way regarding new loans to the former Union—in several cases without the RSFSR Government's consent. I want to stress that Russia will not bear responsibility for honoring agreements reached by Union organs without its official sanction. This also applies to credits for purchasing foodstuffs. After signing the treaty on succession in the Union's external debt and assets, Russia will implement a wholly autonomous foreign economic policy. A Hard Currency Committee headed by Yegor Gaydar has been set up to manage Russia's hard currency state reserves and to resolve questions of guarantees for various credit agreements."

"But what about loans for purposes shared by all or some of the republics without which, in the immediate future at least, it will be impossible to manage?"

"I see no major problems here. If need be, we will coordinate our actions on a bilateral or multilateral basis with the other independent states—former members of the Union. But we have no intention of repaying debts incurred in our name but without our official consent."

The chief of Russia's Foreign Economic Department did not specify whether this applies to any recent specific credit agreements and, if so, which ones. Or whether this is just a precautionary measure of a general nature. In any case, only a desperately courageous creditor would give money to Union or interrepublic organs if repayment were not guaranteed by Russian oil, gas, or gold.

It is also possible to suggest that Petr Aven's stated position was to a certain extent the result of specific actions by the Interstate Economic Committee [IEC]. It is known that on 9 December the IEC will continue talks with a delegation from the EC Commission on the granting of credit worth 1.25 billion ECU [European Currency Units] to purchase foodstuffs and medicines. The talks began during Ivan Silayev's visit to Brussels at the end of November.

This credit "for general use" is also intended to purchase goods for all 12 republics. It is expected that Russia will get around 50 percent of the grain and about 10 percent of the meat purchased with this credit. The other republics' shares have been provisionally defined, but in the current situation there is no certainty that contention over the previously agreed shares will not arise, and given that their representatives did not directly participate in the 9 December talks (only Russia's representative was invited), then they have every right to contest their liability under the treaty which has been concluded.

In principle, a careless credit policy could lose the IEC the support of the republics, which is minimal anyway. The editorial office has learned that Silayev's deputy Gennadiy Kulik drafted a clause on purchasing sugar from Cuba in exchange for oil, timber, and other goods of "undoubted demand." There are no figures on the proposed price for selling energy and other raw materials to the Island of Freedom, but it is known for sure that Cuba is unwilling (or unable) to sell sugar at world prices but is demanding double the price. What can be the present motives for such preferential treatment, which is essentially economic support for the Cuban authorities? It is hardly necessary to be very shrewed to predict Russia's stance on this question, especially as the oil and timber needed to pay for these supplies will come primarily from its territory.

The emerging situation and the possible ensuing complications should clearly be treated as a problem of considering and coordinating the interests of the sovereign

republics: If this problem is not resolved, the interstate organs—and the IEC in particular—could end up in an even more complex situation than at present.

International Affairs

U.S. Secretary of State Baker Visits Moscow

Meets With Kozyrev

LD1512191291 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1837 GMT 15 Dec 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondent Sergey Petukhov]

[Text] Moscow, 15 Dec (TASS)—RSFSR Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev met this evening with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, who is in Moscow on a working visit.

As James Baker noted after the 90-minute conversation, he and Andrey Kozyrev discussed various problems, including humanitarian aid to Russia during the current winter, control over nuclear armaments, and elucidation of the situation in the USSR following the 8 December signing of an agreement on establishing a Commonwealth of Independent States by the leaders of Russia, the Ukraine, and Belarus.

Asked by journalists about the outcome of the conversation, Andrey Kozyrev said that the main results of the talks would be known tomorrow after the meeting between the U.S. secretary of state and RSFSR President Boris Yeltsin.

This evening there was also an unofficial meeting between Eduard Shevardnadze, the USSR minister of external relations, and James Baker. Journalists were not invited to this meeting.

Meets With Yeltsin

LD1612091991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0853 GMT 16 Dec 91

[By diplomatic correspondents Andrey Surzhansiy and Gennadiy Talalayev]

[Text] Moscow, 16 Dec (TASS)—Russian President Boris Yeltsin has just begun a meeting with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, who is here on a working viist. Welcoming the guest, Boris Yeltsin said that although he recently had a telephone conversation with U.S. President George Bush, "we do need to discuss a number of matters in more detail."

Participating in the meeting on the Russian side are Gennadiy Burbulis, first deputy chairman of the Russian Government; Russian Foreign Affairs Minister Andrey Kozyrev; Internal Affairs Minister Viktor Barannikov; and USSR Defense Minister Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov. The U.S. delegation includes Robert Strauss, U.S. ambassador to the USSR, and other officials.

Holds News Conference

LD1612145891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1341 GMT 16 Dec 91

[By Tass diplomatic correspondent Andrey Pershin]

[Text] Moscow, 16 Dec (TASS)—On 21 December another six republics of the former Union will sign an agreement on joining the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS]. This was predicted today by Russian President Boris Yeltsin. He and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker were addressing a news conference after holding four hours of talks.

Continuing the topic of the CIS—agreement reached on 8 December by the leaders of Belarus, Russia, and the Ukraine—Yeltsin disclosed that the member-states of the Commonwealth also would sign a treaty on a defense union with a single command over strategic armed forces.

Yeltsin denied a report carried in some of the mass media which alleged that on 14 December he and USSR Defense Minister Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov had discussed the possible candidature of Mikhail Gorbachev for the post of supreme commander in chief.

The Russian president declined to answer when asked how he sees the political future of Mikhail Gorbachev, merely saying that "Gorbachev himself must decide."

Yeltsin told the journalists that at his meeting with Baker they studied the question of recognition of Russia as an independent state and its accession to UN membership, including the possibility that the RSFSR might take over the Security Council seat that used to belong to the USSR.

The U.S. secretary of state said that he and the RSFSR president had discussed in detail the problem of security over all nuclear weapons and the question of aid to Russia, above all during the current winter period.

Kozyrev Grants Interview on U.S. Relations

LD1512195691 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1812 GMT 15 Dec 91

[By correspondent Pavel Vanichkin]

[Text] Washington, 15 Dec (TASS)—Russia aspires to "a continuation of the direct links that have been established" with the United States, Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev said in an interview today with the U.S. television company CBS. He stressed that during the talks with U.S. Secretary of State James Baker, who is now in Moscow, he hopes for a "qualitative leap" in the development of bilateral relations, inasmuch as "Russia is now acting as an independent state and aspires to having that status recognized."

Kozyrev said that discussion with regard to the problems of control over Soviet nuclear arsenals will occupy a

large place in the talks with the U.S. foreign policy chief. In this connection, the minister declared himself for "unified, centralized control so as to avoid even any hint of the possibility of the proliferation of nuclear weapons," in particular strategic ones.

Commenting on the choice by the leaders of Russia, the Ukraine, and Belarus of Minsk as the coordinating center for community bodies, A. Kozyrev pointed out that this is not a question of a new capital of a new union, because people "are suspicious and frightened at the prospect of any new center emerging." "We are talking about a Commonwealth of Independent States, and Minsk is not to be its capital. Minsk is the capital of Belarus, which is where the coordinating mechanisms are located."

Answering a question about USSR President Gorbachev's political future, the Russian minister said: "In the broad political sense, Gorbachev could play a very important role if he decides to go along with reforms. On the practical level, however, it can be said that the struggle for power on the part of any body from the former Soviet central administration...will add chaos and slow down the implementation of the necessary reforms. I would like Gorbachev-the-reformer [Gorbachev-reformator] as a matter of urgency to make some extremely important decisions which will permit the new states to take upon themselves the necessary responsibility for what is happening."

Gaydar in U.S., Discusses Defense Budget Cut

LD1612092991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 2255 GMT 15 Dec 91

[By correspondent Mikhail Kolesnichenko]

[Text] New York, Dec 16 [date as received] (TASS)—Russian Deputy Prime Minister Yegor Gaydar has advocated making radical cuts to defense spending. Speaking 15 December on the U.S. TV network ABC, he said that "Russia, the Ukraine, and Belarus have given their support to the idea of nuclear disarmament." He also said: "We are going to do all we can to reduce defense spending. The republican budget for next year is now being drafted, and we are trying to make very radical cutbacks to funding of all military programs, including, of course, nuclear weapons." Speaking on the Soviet Union's political future, the deputy prime minister recommented that this will have to be decided during talks among the republics. "I would like to believe," he said, "that there will not be a serious political battle or serious unrest. Relations between the central government and the republican governments are now fairly stable, and we don't think there is a risk of major confrontation. There are, of course, numerous disagreements between the republics as they debate the future Commonwealth and economic matters. I don't think that solutions will come easily. We all agree, however, that it's impossible to try to rebuild the old Union and that we have to create new institutions to resolve a host of political and economic problems."

Gaydar said that Russia is experiencing severe economic difficulties, including that of how to feed its people. "Right now, we are heavily dependent on the food credits that foreign states are extending to Russia and other republics. We will, of course, do everything possible to use the country's entire remaining resources." Asked about the political future of USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev, the Russian deputy prime minister stated in particular: "I think that after a certain transitional period there might be no Union institutions left. I think, therefore, that there will be no role for the Union president. But Gorbachev has, of course, done a great deal for our country and the East European states. He has done a great deal for the people. I would very much like to believe that we will find something else for him, on the basis of his role in our history."

Burbulis Grants Interview on Paris Visit

PM1612135191 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 14 Dec 91 p 4

[Interview with G.E. Burbulis, deputy chairman of the Russian Government, by correspondent N. Dolgopolov in Paris; date not given: "If Burbulis Goes Anywhere, Something Will Happen"—first paragraph is introduction]

[Text] The schedule for his stay in France was more strenuous than you simply could imagine. During a brief 24 hours in Paris, G.E. Burbulis, deputy chairman of the Russian Government, managed to meet incumbent President Francois Mitterrand; former President Giscard d'Estaing; National Assembly President L. Fabius; Minister Delegate for European Affairs E. Guigou; the chairman of the Constitutional Council; the director of the treasury; and representatives of French business circles and the press. Nevertheless he found time in this schedule to answer our correspondent's questions.

[Dolgopolov] Gennadiy Eduardovich, your visit abroad is the first since the agreement on the Commonwealth was signed. What is the purpose of the trip?

[Burbulis] To explain Russia's position to the French. To talk about the economic reform program and the extraordinary, long-term, historical prospects linked with our 8 December decision. President Mitterrand has been handed a memorandum from President Yeltsin. It singles out the main areas of the Russian leadership's activity.

[Dolgopolov] If I understood you correctly, you expect France to recognize the new union of states that has emerged on the territory of what was the USSR?

[Burbulis] I would start by saying that Boris Nikolayevich is preparing to pay an official visit to France at the end of January or beginning of February. We discussed his program. The intention is for major fundamental documents to be signed that would open a

fundamentally new chapter in Russia's fully fledged, autonomous international policy.

[Dolgopolov] People in France are following not only with interest but also with some alarm the rapid development of events in our country. Naturally, the way we will dispose of our nuclear arsenals is worrying. Recently President Mitterrand expressed clear, unconcealed concern in a television statement, saying that he has the impression that tactical nuclear weapons are being virtually auctioned off in Russia.

[Burbulis] These are not typical statements for the president. We know French diplomacy to be restrained and fairly cautious. I can reassure Mitterrand: This impression is mistaken.

[Dolgopolov] What else was discussed during your numerous meetings in Paris?

[Burbulis] A most interesting subject arose. The virtually simultaneous formation of the European Union and the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States on the territory of what was the USSR. There are major indications that some unified line may emerge. If anyone thinks that our Minsk agreement is destructive, that is either naivete or a deliberate distortion of reality. The solution found in Minsk is the only way to break the deadlock in which we have found ourselves for the last 18 months.

[Dolgopolov] You seem to perceive the European Union as an ideal to copy?

[Burbulis] I am talking about the future. Real, specific models must be clarified. In Brussels we will discuss with Jacques Delors (president of the EC Commission) the possibility of Russia's playing a direct part in the European Community and various stages in this participation.

[Dolgopolov] The European Community will have a single currency. Yet, to use a classic Leninist scholar's expression, we "have taken a different path."

[Burbulis] You are wrong in thinking that. We agreed in Moscow that the founder states would abandon the task of swiftly introducing their own currency. They favor preserving the albeit dilapidated but unified ruble area. Reform programs have been coordinated—both on taxation and on issues of privatization and financial activity and, needless to say, in the sphere of social protection for people.

[Dolgopolov] I am convinced that you will have been asked my last question several times, at least in France. Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev is still popular here, surprising as it may seem. Back on 7 December public opinion polls attested that 12 percent of the French have a very good attitude toward him, while 63 percent have simply a good attitude toward him. What role is he destined to take within the framework of the Commonwealth that is being set up?

[Burbulis] I understand the question in human terms, but I am surprised at the insistence with which it is being put to me at home. There are evidently some stereotypes in our consciousness. In Minsk we said that we have had enough of having the lives of millions of people dependent on the personal fate of a particular politician. There are objective historical concepts; there is the skill to heed them and adopt the relevant decision. That is the destiny of today's politicians and that is also the nature of their activity. Mikhail Gorbachev may find a worthy use for his knowledge and talents in the structures that the states will collectively set up.

Burbulis Ends Paris Visit, Goes to Belgium

Meets Foreign Minister Eyskens

LD1312175391 Moscow TASS in English 1557 GMT 13 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Sergey Simonenko]

[Text] Brussels December 13 TASS— Gennadiy Burbulis, first deputy government chairman and Russian state secretary, met Belgian Foreign Minister Marc Eyskens in Brussels on Friday [13 December] to pass him a message of Russian President Boris Yeltsin to the national government.

Eyskens noted the Belgian side is watching with great interest efforts of the Russian leadership and other republics to conduct profound political and economic reforms and upgrade the state structures.

The current changes open up new prospects for the expansion of this cooperation, the Belgian representative said. Belgium wishes every success to the republican heads in their undertakings.

Burbulis informed Eyskens in detail on aspects of the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States. He stressed the Russian leadership's readiness to participate on a constructive basis in the common European building and provide for the maintenance of stability on the continent.

The sides also examined prospects for bilateral cooperation between Belgium and Russia.

Meets With NATO's Woerner

LD1312232791 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 2025 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Text] Brussels, 13 Dec (TASS)—Gennadiy Burbulis, RSFSR state secretary and first deputy chairman of the government, held a meeting in the headquarters of the North Atlantic Alliance today with NATO Secretary General Manfred Woerner. Questions of guaranteeing stability on the continent and the situation in the Soviet Union were at the center of attention.

M. Woerner stressed the particular significance which the leadership of the alliance attaches to the guarantees

of reliable control [kontrol] of nuclear arms on Soviet territory, and of their subordination to a unified command. He expressed hope for a democratic and peaceful development of relations in the country between the central authorities and the republics, the observation of international commitments, and between the successors of the Soviet Union.

On his part, the head of the Russian delegation assured his interlocutor of the loyalty of Russia, the Ukraine, and Belarus, as members of the Commonwealth of Independent States, to these principles. He pointed out that with the signing of the agreement in Minsk, the risk of armed confrontation has decreased considerably since nuclear arms will remain under unified control.

I think M. Woerner was satisfied with the concept I put forward on the military and strategic problems of cooperation between the Commonwealth members, G. Burbulis pointed out after the meeting. It is based upon an article of the Minsk agreement in which the three independent states assume a commitment to guarantee control [kontrol] over nuclear arms, to create a common military and strategicy area [prostranstvo], and to guarantee international peace. At the same time, we intend to develop contacts with the existing European structures, in particular with NATO, while not allowing the level of relations with them to drop.

Meets EC's Delors

LD1312231791 Moscow TASS in English 2041 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Text] Brussels December 13 TASS—Gennadiy Burbulis, head of the visiting Russian delegation, met Jacques Delors, president of the Commission of the European Communities, here today to exchange opinions on ways to fulfill the programmes of economic assistance to the Russian Federation and other republics.

The sides discussed specific measures to implement the existing and new agreements on credits, allocated by the "Twelve" member-countries to the Soviet Union, primarily 500 million ECU (about 600 million U.S. dollars) for food purchases early next year.

The Russian state secretary said he is very satisfied with negotiations with Jacques Delors. He noted they intend to preserve the succession in the implementation of agreements with the EC, that will enable the solution of internal problems.

Gives News Conference

LD1412103191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 2210 GMT 13 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Sergey Simonenko]

[Text] Brussels, 13 Dec (TASS)—Gennadiy Burbulis, RSFSR state secretary and first deputy chairman of government, held a news conference today and assessed the results of the visit by the Russian delegation, which he heads, to Belgium, the European Communities, and NATO, as extremely fruitful. He discussed topical aspects of bilateral relations and problems of rendering economic assistance to Russia and other Soviet republics during the talks that took place. G. Burbulis presented personal messages from Russian President Boris Yeltsin to Jacques Delors, president of the European Commission, and to the Belgian Government.

The head of the Russian delegation underlined in his speech that while being aware of the unique aspect of every meeting that he had with Belgian leaders and with the leaders of the two very important international organizations of the continent, the European Community and NATO, he would like to underline the common traits that united them. First of all, it is the precise assessment of the situation in Russia and of the prospects for the country after the signing in Minsk of the agreement on the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States. I could see for myself that our reform plans were seen positively and that there were concrete prospects for developing cooperation. Most of the politicians here positively assess the results of the Minsk agreement, supporting the programs of political and economic stabilization that we are proposing.

I would like to note that it was no longer possible to continue to be in a dual position regarding the reform process in our country. The existence of the central structures with their very precarious legal basis and highly inefficient governing bodies did not allow us to begin the practical implementation of the reforms because these bodies were slowing down their implementation. Therefore, bearing in mind the interests of Russia, the Ukraine, and Belarus, we together worked out a new form of community: the Commonwealth. We chose this form on the basis of real conditions and bearing in mind that the republics could cooperate, helping each other, while renouncing the totalitarian regime. I think that the support for the agreement expressed by Armenia and the Baltic republics shows that what we did was right.

The Minsk agreement does not actually exclude the possibility of "loose" participation by the Baltic states in our community. Maybe it will an association. At any rate, we created conditions for widening cooperation with them.

The Russian representative said that many questions were asked about whether single bodies of the Commonwealth would be set up. Yes, we will need coordinating bodies. In time, they will be transformed into governing structures. There will be councils of the heads of states and of the heads of governments. It seems to me that it will be necessary to set up councils of relevant ministries in order to solve basic industrial problems. There will also be some more "rigid" forms of cooperation, such as in the area of the defense, transportation, nuclear energy, and the policy regarding the fundamental sciences, but all these problems will have to be debated by all parties.

Touching upon the problem of food supplies in Russia, G. Burbulis pointed out that it remained a complicated matter, although very variable depending on the region. In the southern regions of the RSFSR, there are large stocks which are being held back and not released onto the consumer market. One of the reasons for this is the anticipation of price liberalization. We are taking various steps to solve this problem, he said, but it depends on many conditions. One of the main conditions is to effectively use foreign aid and to neutralize those groups of population who are striving to retain the socialist system, which keeps everyone at the same level. We do not want to look as if we are being dependent, and we are sure that we will solve our problems.

Ends Visit, Leaves for Moscow

LD1412095591 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0912 GMT 14 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Sergey Simonenko]

[Text] Brussels, 14 Dec (TASS)—The visit to the Belgian capital by the Russian Government delegation led by Gennadiy Burbulis, RSFSR state secretary and first deputy chairman of the government, has come to an end. The delegation left for Moscow today.

During the visit, the head of the Russian delegation had talks with Jacques Delors, president of the Commission of the European Communities, on expanding bilateral cooperation and providing economic assistance to the Soviet side. At the same time, specific measures were agreed upon regarding the EC's provision of food aid to Russia's largest cities—Moscow and St. Petersburg. G. Burbulis also met Belgian Foreign Minister Mark Eyskens and NATO Secretary General Manfred Woerner. He handed messages from Russian President Boris Yeltsin to the president of the EC Commission and to the Belgian Government.

Grants Interview

LD1612093691

[Editorial Report] Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian at 2132 GMT on 15 December broadcast an unscheduled report by correspondent Kipras Mazheyka entitled "On G. Burbulis' Visit to Belgium." It began with shots of NATO and EC buildings in Brussels, and then shows Burbulis, RSFSR first deputy prime minister, arriving at NATO headquarters and sitting down to an informal conversation with NATO Secretary General Manfred Woerner—seven men were present in all—and then entering a conference room for a formal meeting, six or seven men on each side. Correspondent Mazheyka referred in general terms to the changes in the international scene and the setting up of the Commonwealth of Independent States, CIS, and to the fact that the West recognized that there was no longer a military threat from the East but was interested in knowing how many fingers there would be on the nuclear button. "The delegation from Moscow gave a clear and open account of our position on this," Mazheyka said, adding that Soviet strategic missiles will remain under unified command as "the North Atlantic alliance's security is also our security." The scene then shifted to the EC Commission building, where Burbulis is seen meeting Jacques Delors, European Commission president. Mazheyka recalled the recent European summit's discussion of the situation in the former USSR and added that Burbulis handed over a personal message from Yeltsin to Delors.

Mazheyka said: "When the meeting ended, Gennadiy Burbulis gave an exclusive interview to Russian Television." The two men were then seated in conversation, and Mazheyka asked: "Gennadiy Eduardovich, as I understand it this is your first visit as Russia's deputy prime minister to the West in general and to the West European capital in particular. What were your tasks in visiting the EC and NATO headquarters?"

Burbulis replied: "Today one task is to give a deep and all-around explanation of the real situation in Russia and within the framework of the states, the Commonwealth, formed in Minsk. The second task is to make more precise the joint programs for economic cooperation within the framework of the radical reforms which the government of Russia is beginning to implement. I am convinced, after this first round or first part of the talks with Jacques Delors, chairman of the Commission of the European Community, that we have a pretty deep understanding—and, what is most important, a very specific and targeted cooperation and aid program in new forms and amounts. In particular, we discussed Russia's place and that of other states which are members of the Commonwealth, as successors to the agreements already adopted within the framework of the old structures of administration and within the framework of the Interstate Committee.

"The second interesting and important thing," continued Burbulis, "is that Mr. Delors briefed us on a possible serious decision on targeted aid to our two capitals—Moscow and St. Petersburg—in the sphere of humanitarian aid in the next few days. Some organizational and technical tasks need to be fine tuned today.

"Finally," said Burbulis, "my comrades in arms, Petr Aven [head of the RSFSR Committee on Foreign Relations] and Andrey Nechayev [deputy director of the Economic Policy Institute] will now discuss the mechanism for using the credits which were at one time pledged, in order to avoid any pause at all, in this new situation, in putting them to practical targeted use, taking into account the innovations in banking and innovations in administration on our Russian territory."

Mazheyka then said: "Let us be blunt about this, though. The declaration by the leaders of the three Slav republics which resounded from Belovezhskaya Pushcha evoked an ambiguous response in the West. Against a background of generally positive reactions, there was some

frank skepticism to be heard. Did you manage to persuade your opponents while you were in France and here in Belgium?"

Burbulis replied: "That was not the set task. For the most part, we met with a very proper response to the innovation of 8 December and with a more accurate understanding of its prospects than we sometimes meet with at home. There was no need to make people change their minds. We did indeed have to go into some profound explanations on some things, and to think some things through together, because our partners are quite rightly worried about the forms of legislation and organization by which the Commonwealth will operate. They are worried about whether it will destabilize the situation further. They were given pretty clear answers, to the effect that we are convinced—and the past few days have demonstrated this—that on the contrary, Minsk creates realistic and constructive prospects, and stabilizes and strengthens our processes considerably. Our Western partners are finally getting the opportunity of doing business clearly and in a targeted way, and in a specific direction—and which is, above all, accessible for most people."

Mazheyka then said: "The last question: on 16 December the EC Council of Ministers will examine their attitude to the new state formation, the Commonwealth of Independent States. What decision are you expecting from the EC in this regard? Have you discussed this with Delors, for example?"

Burbulis replied: "We have discussed this, and these discussions will be continued."

Mazheyka continued: "If it is not a secret, of course?"

Burbulis said: "The result will, I think, be in keeping with the scale and wisdom of this organization. We will receive quite proper support for our prospects; the programs which currently exist will be considerably elaborated, and new ones added. We are becoming convinced, that is, that the European Community is in solidarity with the transformations taking place in our country. At the same time, it is to be hoped that we can avoid any delay here, any reorganizational delay, which might have an impact on the business we have together today."

Mazheyka then concluded the interview and said: "Thank you for the interview, Genadiy Eduardovich; may I wish you successful completion of your mission."

Lawyer Says Honecker Wants 'To Negotiate'

LD1312152891 Hamburg DPA in German 1259 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Text] Berlin (DPA)—According to Nicolas Becker, who is the lawyer for Erich Honecker, former GDR state and party leader who has fled to the Chilean Embassy in Moscow, Honecker would like to negotiate with the Russian Government about his future. In a conversation with DPA today, Becker said that his client's flight to the embassy took place under heavy time pressure. The 79-year-old attempted to circumvent the Russian Government's deadline, which says that he has to leave the country by 2400 today at the latest.

According to Becker, Honecker is still hoping to be able to leave for a country of his choice. Even before his flight it was known that he was a close friend of the Chilean ambassador in Moscow. Becker and other lawyers cannot say if Honecker always had these escape plans. Becker has had no contact with the former GDR leader since the latter has been in the Chilean Embassy.

Government Position Unchanged

LD1312165291 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1442 GMT 13 Dec 91

[By TASS diplomatic correspondents Viktor Runov and Sergey Staroselskiy]

[Text] Moscow, 13 Dec (TASS)—The Russian Government is not changing its position regarding former GDR leader Erich Honecker, a spokesman of the RSFSR Foreign Ministry told TASS today.

The spokesman was commenting on the situation which has arisen since Erich Honecker was granted the status of "guest" in the residence of the Chilean ambassador in Moscow. On 12 December the Chilean Foreign Ministry issued an official statement ruling out the possibility of granting the former GDR leader political asylum. At the same time, the document noted that he may remain on the territory of the Chilean Embassy in the USSR "in his former capacity," "until the Moscow authorities have clarified the situation."

According to the decision of the Russian leadership, Erich Honecker must leave the RSFSR by the end of the day. However, as the spokesman of the RSFSR Foreign Ministry stressed, the Russian diplomatic service intends to use "civilized methods" in seeking a mutually acceptable way out of the situation.

Honecker To Stay Until 16 Dec

LD1412121291 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1148 GMT 14 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Gennadiy Talalayev]

[Text] Moscow, 14 Dec (TASS)—The Russian Government has met Erich Honecker's request to postpone until 16 December the execution of the decision to expel him from the country, Russian Justice Minister Nikolay Fedorov told a TASS correspondent today. In answer to the question of what will happen if Honecker does not leave the Moscow residence of the Chilean ambassador to the USSR, where he is at present, on 16 December, Nikolay Fedorov stated: "Then the mechanism for the forced implementation of the government decision will

be put into effect." The minister said that the government is aware of the readiness of DPRK authorities to accept Honecker there, but "they have not contacted Russia about it."

Kozyrev: Honecker Not Our Problem

LD1612102491 Berlin ADN in German 0937 GMT 16 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow (ADN)—According to Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev, the Federal Government should contact the Chilean Embassy in Moscow in order to find a solution to the Honecker issue. Speaking to RIA news agency in Moscow today, the minister said the case has "ended in a dead end street." On one hand the Soviet Government wants to fulfill all its obligations to Germany, but on the other hand the former GDR state and party chief has threatened to commit suicide if he is forcibly extradited to the German authorities.

"In view of this complicated situation only the German authorities can decide on possible measures for Honecker's return to the Federal Republic," Kozyrev said. The Russian side will not put pressure on Honecker. He can leave the mission of the South American country freely at any time. Kozyrev confirmed that the Russian Government still refuses to grant political asylum to the former GDR head of state as there is no basis for this.

If Honecker were to leave the country to receive medical treatment in North Korea, this would solve the problem for the Russian side, Kozyrev said, but at the same time it would raise the question of who is responsible. Honecker could also receive further medical treatment either in the Federal Republic or in Russia.

Khasbulatov Terms ROK Visit 'Effective'

LD1512174591 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0951 GMT 11 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondents Ivan Zakharchenko and Vladimir Kuchko]

[Text] Seoul, 11 Dec (TASS)—Russia will strive to develop comprehensive links with the Republic of Korea, taking upon itself the international obligations of the former Soviet Union. This was stated by Ruslan Khasbulatov, chairman of the RSFSR Supreme Soviet, in an interview with TASS on the results of his four-day visit to South Korea. The visit to Seoul by our parliamentary delegation, he stressed, has been effective. During meetings with President No Tae-u, leading members of the South Korean parliament, businessmen, and leaders of political parties, "we set out in detail the situation in our country, and instilled optimism and faith in Russian policy."

The Republic of Korea has received firm assurances that credits advanced by it will be settled by Russia. This position was received with satisfaction by the Seoul leadership and especially by President No Tae-u, who reaffirmed his policy of expanding cooperation with and economic aid for our country.

Regarding the prospects for development of Russo-South Korean trade and economic relations, Ruslan Khasbulatov spoke in favor of cooperation primarily with the Russian Far East: These would be the most effective and mutually beneficial contacts. For example, South Korean firms could play a more active role in exploiting natural resources, in particular Sakhalin oil, and in industry and civil engineering, he said. The Russian parliamentary delegation departed today for Moscow.

Comments on Nuclear Issue

PM1512164591 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 13 Dec 91 First Edition p 1

[Unattributed report: "Visit Over"]

[Text] RSFSR Supreme Soviet Chairman Ruslan Khasbulatov has returned to Moscow after completing an official visit to South Korea. Replying to a question from journalists on the results of his visit to South Korea, Ruslan Khasbulatov noted that at the present time Russia is seriously concerned by the process of the possible expansion of the nuclear presence, including on the territory of the Korean peninsula. All this was reflected in the meetings with leaders of the South Korean parliament. During the conversations questions of bilateral cooperation between the Russian and South Korean parliaments were extensively discussed.

Interrepublic Affairs

Leaders Sign Communique on Relations

LD1312172891 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1432 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Text] Minsk, 13 Dec (BELTA-TASS)—"Relations between the Republic of Moldova and the Republic of Belarus will be based on mutual recognition and respect for state sovereignty, the principles of equality of rights, and noninterference in one another's internal affairs, renunciation of the use of force, settlement of disputes by peaceful means, and respect for human rights and freedoms," according to the communique on the results of the meeting between Mircea Snegur and Stanislav Shushkevich that took place in the capital of Belarus today.

"The sides concluded that it is necessary to continue the process of working out and concluding agreements on issues of mutual interest. It was agreed that in the near future they will embark on drawing up a bilateral interstate treaty on the principles of cooperation between them and on establishing diplomatic relations," the document notes. At a brief news conference, Mircea Snegur and Stanislav Shushkevich assessed the relations between Moldova and Belarus as being good and adequate, having noted that sovereign republics have become good partners in economic sphere. Both leaders are deeply convinced that this meeting will strengthen bilateral ties. They regret that Moldova's president had to interrupt his trip and return to Kishinev because of the Dubossary events. Stanislav Shushkevich noted that despite information which has been circulated, there are no plans to sign an agreement in Minsk on Moldova's joining the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Belarus

Defense Minister Views Military Reform

LD1312164991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1250 GMT 13 Dec 91

[By a BELTA/TASS correspondent]

[Text] Minsk, 13 Dec (TASS)—There is no point in being hasty to hand over nuclear weapons to anyone, whomever they are, and this statement in no way contradicts the goal proclaimed by the republic to make Belarus a neutral and nuclear-free power. This was stated in an interview given by Lieutenant General Petr Chaus, head of the Ministry for Defense Affairs [Ministerstvo no Delam Oborony] of the republic to BELTA correspondents today. "Embarking on the implementation of the declaration on the state sovereignty of Belarus, and also of agreements on the Commonwealth of Independent States, one must take into account that the republic has the bitter historical experience of many wars and invasions," the general said. "Its geographical position is such that it was inevitably drawn into military conflicts. The times are turbulent now, too. The possibility of the advent of totalitarian regimes in individual states cannot be ruled out. Many problems have arisen in the Army, too, and they must be tackled with the participation of sovereign republics."

A large group of troops totalling almost 180,000 people is concentrated on the territory of Belarus, the minister noted. There are nuclear weapons and the latest mobile missile units. Approximately one half of the regiments and units do not come within the Belarussian Military District, but are subordinate to the center and are independently supplied. "This structure is too cumbersome and extensive and has assumed vast proportions. We need to think on how to improve it and cut it back," he stressed. "We imagine that the group of troops should be cut back to 90,000," the general said.

Talking about the creation of Belarus' own armed forces, Petr Chaus noted that implementation of this idea will have to be divided into two phases. The first will be a transitional phase, when the Ministry for Defense Affairs will organize initial preparations, conscription into the armed forces, troop recruitment, pension provisions for veterans, and training the reserve. At the second stage, the ministry will conduct preparations for taking all the armed formations on the territory of Belarus under its jurisdiction, and finally, a national army will be formed.

The timescale for carrying out the reforms, the minister noted, will be dictated by the political circumstances and possibilities in the republic, and also with the participation of its neighbors, primarily the Russian Federation, in so far as the military interests of Russia extend onto the territory of Belarus.

Moldova

Snegur on Minsk Pact, Republic's Intentions

OW1412015191 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1219 GMT 14 Dec 91

["Nation and Society" exclusive interview with Moldovan President Mircea Snegur by unidentified correspondent, on the forming of a Commonwealth of Independent States; place and date not given; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Corr. [Correspondent]: Mr. President, how do you feel about Belarus, Ukraine and Russia's signing a treaty on a community in Brest?

Mircea Snegur [M.S.]: It is still early to draw far-reaching conclusions. I can only say that for us at any rate, it is good that the present agreement does not affect relations by its participants with "third" countries. We are willing to cooperate. We shall contemplate joining the community if there are guarantees that it won't become another Soviet Union.

At the moment I am not sure that such a community is appropriate for Moldova. It all depends on how events

continue to develop. For instance, we are interested in what will happen to the economic agreement. It is plain to see that it will be forgotten. If this happens, there is no particular reason for Moldova to stay in it. Moldova is interested in profitable bilateral relations with all of the members of the new community.

Corr.: What sort of role do you think Gorbachev plays in the political process?

M.S.: My personal opinion: Gorbachev has played a large role in the democratisation of society, but he was inconsistent in carrying out reforms in the internal policies of the state. This caused the state to look for other opportunities. On a personal level it's possible to understand Gorbachev: it's not particularly enjoyable when you are the leader of the the USSR, and the country disintegrates into fifteen sovereign states. I think that even an extraordinary congress could not find a good solution to this situation. Countries which have voted for independence should decide their fates themselves. In Gorbachev's place I would resign. This makes all the more sense now since the body which elected him president no longer exists.

Corr.: How will the problem of relocating the Soviet military presently in Moldova be solved?

M.S.: This is a complicated question. Today the reality is, unfortunately, that there is no way to negotiate about this.

But we should take them into the army. You know that we made an order on nationalising the property of the armed forces located on the territory of the Republic of Moldova. We suggest that all officers from Moldova return to the republic, and on the basis of the nationalised property, we plan to create a national army. But I would like to note once again that we are not talking about immediately removing the army which is located here from the territory of the republic. That would be inhuman. We are in favour of a gradual removal of the army.

Corr.: What are your next steps in economics and politics?

M.S.: Starting January 1, 1992, we will start concrete eforts to introduce a market economy. In ten days I intend to propose a concrete plan of action in this direction to parliament and to demand from parliament additional powers for myself. The package of laws to realise these reforms will be introduced as presidential decrees.

In politics, contacts with Moldova's neighbours will be strengthened, in the first place with Ukraine, Belarus, the Russian Federation and Romania. We need to discuss a group of problems regarding our interrelations directed towards strengthening good will and integration with our neighbours. With this goal in mind, I am planning shortly to visit some capitalist countries.

Generally, the internal affairs of the republic worry me most today—guaranteeing that the army won't interfere in our affairs, disarming the separatist formations, and finding peaceful solutions to any internal problems.

Corr.: How are you planning to build relations with the Dnestr region and Gagauzia?

M.S.: I am ready to do everything possible to find a common language through a conciliatory commission without establishing any conditions. But one condition still exists, that is the disarmament of the separatist formations and that the army does not interfere in our internal affairs.

Reportage Highlights Violence in Dnestr Region

Parliament Statement on Incidents

AU1412152991 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1116 GMT 14 Dec 91

[Text] Chisinau [Kishinev], ROMPRES, 14/12/1991—"An incident took place on December 13, 1991, on the bridge of Dubossary, across the Dnester, that resulted in casualties. It is a new provocation against Moldova's sovereignty and independence", reads a statement by the Presidium of the parliament of the Republic of Moldova, released by MOLDOVA PRES.

"The incident," the document mentions, "is a consequence of the ample campaign for the population's misinformation, that thus allows the reactionary forces to involve in conflict big groups of deceived people, to organize illegal armed groups, to use for their purposes units of the Soviet Army.

"All steps taken by the leaders of the republic for the parliamentary settlement of the issues have remained without a response.... Desperate attempts are made to thwart the economic and political links with Russia, the Ukraine, Belorussia, with other states that have embarked on the path of independence, to nullify the results of the meetings between Moldova's leaders and the leaders of those states".

The Presidium of the parliament of the Republic of Moldova "urges all the population to be calm and not to believe the rumors and provocative appeals that may lead to a worsening of the situation and to more casualties and invites the leaders with aggressive intentions in the districts left of the Dnester to show lucid-mindedness", the statement reads.

Dubossary Situation 'Worsened'

AU1512174291 Bucharest Radio Romania Network in Romanian 0508 GMT 15 Dec 91

[Text] Chisinau [Kishinev] Radio and Television has continued to broadcast alarming news in connection with the situation in the Republic of Moldova, which, according to President Snegur, has worsened to the greatest extent possible. Thus all road entrances to and

exits from Dubossary and Grigoriopol have been blocked by military trucks filled with stones and sand. Also in Dubossary region, someone who belongs to the left bank of the Dnestr opened fire on a patrol that was carrying out a routine check, using a gun with telescopic sights. MOLDOVA PRES informs us, quoting a representative of the State Department for Military Issues of the Republic of Moldova, that in the so-called Dnestr Republic the first Russian volunteers from St. Petersburg and [name indistinct], members of the Cossack Party from all over Russia have arrived. TASS notes in connection with the latest events that a group of citizens from the left bank of the Dnestr called on the president of the Republic of Moldova, Mircea Snegur, to ask the United Nations to send troops to this region to maintain order.

Last night, Radio Chisinau broadcast an appeal by president Mircea Snegur to all the citizens of Moldova. Mr. Snegur called on all citizens of Moldova to keep calm and not to let themselves be drawn into any kind of provocation that might complicate further the situation in the republic. President Snegur reminded people that none of the political leaders on the left bank of the Dnestr, except for the president of the Dubossary District Executive Committee, has answered his appeal to conciliation aimed at ending this conflict. He ensured the Moldovan people that the entire leadership of the republic is making great efforts to reinstate peace and calm and that the leadership of the republic continues to be open to dialogue.

Leaders of other republics that are neighbors of Moldova are concerned by the conflict that broke out in the Dubossary region. The president of the Russian federation, Boris Yeltsin, in a telegram expressed his concern with this situation as well as his regret for the victims that this conflict has claimed so far. Boris Yeltsin also referred to the prospects opened up by the Minsk accord for the possible establishment of a union according to the West European model.

Residents Appeal For UN Forces

LD1412221191 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1745 GMT 14 Dec 91

[Text] Kishinev, 14 Dec (TASS)—A group of residents from the Dnestr left bank have appealed to Mircea Snegur, president of Moldova, with a request that he use his great prestige and request that the United Nations send its forces to maintain order on the left bank. This was reported on republic radio. The appeal states that the situation has become heated on the left bank, where more than 40 percent of the population are Moldovans. A real persecution campaign is being conducted on local radio against leaders of Moldovan nationality. The idea of the Romanianization of the right bank of Moldova is being forcibly whipped up and elementary human rights are being violated.

Attempt To Hold Talks 'Failure'

OW1412192191 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1700 GMT 14 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] President of Moldova Mircea Snegur's attempts to hold talks with the Dnestr authorities in Kishinev on December 14 were a failure. The talks were to begin at 11 a.m., but only Chairman of the Dubossary regional executive committee turned up.

According to the Moldovan president's press service, the Moldovan leaders evaluate this fact as "refusal to begin a constructive dialogue aimed at settling the conflict".

The press service also reports that Mr. Snegur has sent a second telegram to the Dnestr authorities demanding that they "immediately arrive" for resolving the situation and warning that "refusal to take part in the talks will lead to a civil war".

Military District Denies Involvement

LD1412160591 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1307 GMT 14 Dec 91

[By UKRINFORM correspondent Yefim Shvartsman]

[Text] Odessa, 14 Dec (TASS)—The command of the Odessa military region continues to deny that any of the divisions or sub-units from the okrug billeted in Moldova are taking part in the conflict going on there, Colonel Sergey Limarenko, the district duty officer, told the agency's correspondent today. He noted that at the present time Lieutenant-General Yuriy Kuznetsov, the first deputy commander of the district, has gone to Tiraspol to evaluate the situation.

Commission Set Up To Resolve Crisis

LD1512195191 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1900 GMT 15 Dec 91

[From the "TV Inform" newscast]

[Text] The result of today's talks in Kishinev is that a conciliation commission has been formed to overcome the crisis. The members of the commission are already working in the area of the conflict. According to a report from the press service of the president of Moldova, questions concerning establishing peace in the area, first and foremost the separation of the forces opposing each other, are being discussed. It is expected that observers from the Commonwealth of Independent States, from other countries, and from international organizations will arrive in Kishinev in the next few days.

Snegur, the president of Moldova, declared 17 December to be a day of mourning throughout the territory of the republic. The mourning has been declared because of the casualties in the neighborhood of Dubossary following the events of 12 December.

Armed Units Withdraw From Region

OW1612120291 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1127 GMT 16 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] All armed units were withdrawn from the Dnestr region Monday [16 December] morning to their bases in accordance with a decision taken by the conciliatory commission formed by Moldova's president in order to settle Friday's [13 December] conflict that took place outside the city of Dubossary on the left bank of the [incomplete sentence as received]

The commission's chairman, Moldova's First Deputy Prime Minister Andrey Sangeli, said that everything possible had been done to stop the bloodshed. All the problems, he said, can and must be resolved by peaceful means, at the negotiating table.

7 persons (4 Moldovan policemen among them) were killed and 17 wounded last Friday in an armed clash between Moldovan police and Dnestr region guardsmen outside Dubossary.

IF's [INTERFAX] correspondent reports that members of the conciliatory commission for settling the conflict in the Dnestr region are meeting with President Mircea Snegur Monday morning. Subsequently they intend to return to Dubossary.

Gagauz Deputies Recognize Dnestr Republic

LD1312232891 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 2155 GMT 13 Dec 91

["Television News Service" report]

[Text] A session of the Gagauz Republic Supreme Soviet took place today. The deputies recognized the Dnestr Moldovan Republic as a sovereign, independent state. Condemning the unleashing of military actions, a declaration was adopted on the provision of any necessary aid to the people of the Dnestr region. The Gagauz self-defense forces have been put on full alert.

Ukraine

Kravchuk on Commonwealth, Nuclear Arms

LD1512173191 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1310 GMT 15 Dec 91

[Telephone interview with Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk in Kiev by correspondents Yuliy Semenov, Tuleubay Kaymuldinov, and Igor Rudometov in Moscow; and correspondent Viktor Pasak in Kiev—live]

[Text] [Semenov] Good day. We are beginning a dialogue live on the airwaves with Leonid Makarovich Kravchuk, president of independent Ukraine. Can we have Kiev, please?

Leonid Makarovich, on behalf of the journalists' team involved in today's program, and I believe that the television viewers will support us, too, we congratulate you on your election to this high office and I believe that we can congratulate the television viewers and electorate of Ukraine on the choice they made, both in the referendum and in the presidential elections.

[Kravchuk] Thank you.

[Semenov] And now, I want to explain to the listeners how our program will be conducted. As you already have realized, today we have a direct Kiev-Moscow television bridge. In the studio in Kiev along with Leonid Makarovich Kravchuk, president of Ukraine, is our colleague Viktor Vladimirovich Pasak. And here, in our studio, along with me are my colleagues Tuleubay Kaymuldinov from Kazakhstan, and Igor Rudometov, my colleague from Belarus. As you can see, we are all heading toward a commonwealth of independent states, and accordingly, the character and structure of our broadcast should take account of the realities of the times. But now, I ask our colleague from Kiev to briefly introduce his president to our television viewers. Go ahead, please.

[Pasak] Good afternoon. And so, in the Kiev studio is Leonid Makarovich Kravchuk, president of independent Ukraine.

A few lines from his biography for viewers from all regions. He was born in a peasant family in 1934 in the village of (Velikiy Zhytyn) in Rovenskaya Oblast. He is Ukrainian. His father died at the front in 1944. His mother worked on a collective farm. He graduated from Rovno Cooperative Technical College, Kiev State University, and the Academy of Social Sciences, and is a candidate of economics. From 1958 to 1960, he worked as a teacher of political economy at Chernovtsy Financial College. From 1960, he was involved in party work. As secretary, and then as second secretary of the central committee, he favored the creation of an independent communist party of Ukraine, for its reform into a democratic political party of a parliamentary type. During the August coup, he left the party, convinced that the CPSU leadership was involved in it.

In 1990, he was elected a people's deputy of Ukraine for the Yampol constituency No. 39, Vinnitskaya Oblast. From June of that year, he was chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Ukraine. On 1 December 1991, he was elected president of Ukraine.

And so, Leonid Makarovich, over to you.

[Kravchuk] First and foremost, I should like to welcome the journalists who are in the studio in Moscow.

[Pasak] Thank you.

[Kravchuk] And also, the television viewers with whom we are to be conducting our dialogue today.

I will probably start with the main, most important event, which took place at the beginning of this month. I am talking about the Minsk meeting at which the Commonwealth of Independent States was formed. Without exaggeration, I should like to say that our people are today assimilating this event, and it is the focus of attention for the world community too.

As you can see, a truly historical event has taken place, and its significance lies in the fact that first, three great states met in Belarus in order to suggest a way of forming a new commonwealth, a way to salvation, a way of saving the people from confrontation and from interethnic wars. This is the path toward uniting efforts on an equal basis.

We have all seen that as a result of the ill-considered policy of the center, the collapse of the center has assumed an uncontrolled character. The disruption of economic links has led to economic ruin. The danger of confrontation between peoples has arisen which could undoubtedly end in catastrophe, or most likely of all, could end in reactionary forces coming to power. Events of 19-21 August confirm that such fears are not unfounded.

It is in this very tragic year that, and I repeat, three great states have come together in order to find a way to save the situation, and it seems to us that we have found such a path. If we all stick to those principles which we have affirmed, and do not brush them aside nor aim to establish centralizd power structures on any pretext whatsoever, and if we respect the documents which have been drawn up, then this means that this commonwealth will be able to exist.

Our peoples will now live in a unitary [pauses] will no longer live in a unitary state which suppressed their desire for freedom, but each person will be in his own house, so each will be master of his own land. We will live under one heaven, preserving the ties of friendship and brotherhood on an honorable and just basis, without suspicion.

One people cannot be subordinated to the interests of the other. There will be neither great nor small, between those who are leading and those who are lead. We all will be good friends. Will you agree, that freedom and independence of every people is the only possible condition of real friendship and independence. We start creating the commonwealth. We start this, leaning on the support not only from the Slavic peoples but other peoples as well, all peoples, and the Ashkhabad meeting demonstrates this. And we do not accept the thesis that this formation was created on ethnic grounds. No, this commonwealth is open to everybody.

[Pasak] In spite of the fact, Leonid Makarovich, that many intelligent people bring up this thesis.

[Kravchuk] It seems to me, they bring it up precisely because they are intelligent. They want to impose their own point of view. This is not good. I think the very openness of our agreement is the second, very important, word or thesis. And confidence. Confidence now means that we can keep the situation under control. Confidence in interaction in the economic and other spheres. We will cooperate, taking into account the interests of each other. We will create such a world and such states which will directly participate in creating a new world structure, peace and security. We have all spoken in favor of, and we are all striving to see the elimination of all nuclear weapons. We will aim for total disarmament; that is our great, common goal. We will establish a mechanism that can provide a guarantee that the nuclear forces that will be under single control will not be used.

We must tell all those people who doubt the authenticity, correctness, and principles behind our agreement that it has been established on a constitutional basis and that it corresponds to international norms. It corresponds to human rights and it protects national minorities and it serves the cause of peace and security. Moreover, every state remains a state in full measure.

I should like to end this introduction by quoting two great people, two geniuses: Shevchenko and Pushkin. Shevchenko dreamed that we all would live in a new and free family, and Aleksandr Pushkin at the start of his greatness said: Our union is wonderful. I should like to say that this union will be wonderful and that the family will be new and free under one, extremely important, condition: Each will build and protect the interests of one's own people and make a contribution to the commonwealth. But one should beware of a very dangerous turn: Not to take a single step in order to build one's own life and one's own wealth at the expense of others. This needs to be avoided; then our community will live, develop, and grow stronger.

[Pasak] Thank you, Leonid Makarovich. Now over to my colleagues in Moscow.

[Semenov] Yes, we thank you, Leonid Makarovich, for these words which, we believe, have set the tone for our entire conversation today. Now, with your permission, we would like to go over to questions. But, apart from us, you will, of course, be asked questions by TV viewers. Someone has, evidently, already seen the numbers of the telephones on the screens, but I want to remind our listeners of them. The Moscow telephone numbers are 217-45-63 and 217-45-63. For those telephoning from other towns, the Moscow code for automatic connection is 095. The Kiev telephone numbers are 229-50-19 and 229-50-19. The Kiev code is 044.

Now, Leonid Makarovich, I will permit myself to ask you the following question: It always seems to have been some sort of tradition that every president has his first 100 days. Of these 100 days, the first 10 already have passed. Perhaps we could put the question as follows: What do you regard as the priorities, the practical tasks of your policy, what you already have done and what do you intend to do in the next three months? Over to you.

[Kravchuk] The way I understand it, 100 days is a nominal figure.

[Semenov] It is nominal.

[Kravchuk] It also can be 50 days, it also can be 200 or 300 days. But the way I understand it, the 100 days are the guarantee which has been given to the president for carrying out his duties.

[Semenov] This is a time when he can show his policy in practice.

[Kravchuk] I think that the main priorities—and we have begun to implement them—are: first, stabilizing the economy and the real—I repeat, real—profound reform of all structures of economic and political power; second, solving the food problem and saturating the market with consumer goods; and third, social protection of the population during the market transition. These are the three major priority tasks, the implementation of which we are beginning.

It is natural that now, after the Minsk meeting, efforts to strengthen the new Commonwealth of Independent States will be one of our top priority tasks.

[Semenov] You already have touched on the topic of the Commonwealth. We have many questions—you can see them—linked to this topic. These questions could, in essence be summarized as follows: To what extent is the independence of the Ukraine compatible with its participation in the Commonwealth? This problem interests Nikolay Sokurenko, Garzhevskiy, viewers from Moscow, Klichkov from Moscow, and other viewers—and also listeners to the radio, since today we recorded questions which we received after the program had been advertised on Radio Mayak.

[Kaymuldinov] Yuliy, may I add another question?

[Semenov] Of course, of course.

[Kaymuldinov] I should like to add a question, Leonid Makarovich. Esteemed president, the inhabitants of Kazakhstan understand the concept of the Commonwealth of Independent States. But, for some reason, the emphasis has been placed on a union of Slav states. The result would appear to be a Trojan horse for the Soviet Union. I want to find out what is hidden inside this latter-day horse?

[Kravchuk, chuckling] I should like to reassure everybody, including the peoples of Asia, the peoples of Kazakhstan, and representatives of other peoples: Nowhere in this document, which we have signed, is there so much as a word about it being a community, a commonwealth, of Slav peoples. It clearly and succinctly states that the community, the Commonwealth, is open to all states, irrespective of nationality or groups of nations represented in those states. That's the first thing.

Second, I wish to stress that there is no danger of this community, or the implementation of the principle behind the community, leading to a loss of independence—and not only Ukraine's independence. I do not want people to think that I am saying that only Ukraine aspires to independence. I understand the mood of the peoples. I understand their aspiration to achieve rebirth. I realize that this a worldwide process, common to all the peoples—if one applies it to our peoples—and a worldwide one at the same time. It is an aspiration for independence. One might get the impression that, while everybody else is striving toward a single goal, Ukraine alone, allegedly, is advocating independence. I wish to stress that the document which we signed, the principles enshrined in it, guarantee complete independence for every nation and every state.

[Pasak] Incidentally, Leonid Makarovich, I believe that my Kazakh colleague's apprehensions about a coalition of Slav nations are heightened by today's statements in the central press and on Central Television by Galina Starovoytova, who is, incidentally, an adviser to the president of Russia.

[Kravchuk] I believe...

[Pasak, interrupting] She said...

[Kravchuk, interrupting] Yes, I heard what she said.

[Pasak] If many other states join this Commonwealth, she said, this will alienate Ukraine, which supports the idea of a Slav coalition.

[Kravchuk] I believe that I should like to advise everyone, politicians as well as ordinary citizens, not to listen to comments but to read the document.

[Semenov] Yes, indeed, some of our colleagues have done a bad service to our Commonwealth by putting such an emotional accent on the Slav association. A question from my Belarus colleague, please.

[Rudometov] Leonid Makarovich, the agreement on creating a Commonwealth of Independent States almost has been unanimously ratified by the parliament of the Belarus Republic. You know this very well. Only one vote against and two abstentions...

[Kravchuk, interrupting] We congratulate the Belarus Supreme Soviet...

[Rudometov, interrupting] But, at the same time, apart from reproaches in the mass media, other people are making various pronouncements, such as those of Starovoytova, with similar opinions. There are concerns, all the same. After all, now a number of other independent states—former republics of the former USSR—are ready to join Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus. And the question arises here—will this Commonwealth of Independent States become a mirror image of the former USSR, so to speak, with all the former negative tendencies in the economy, agriculture, national culture? You are saying now that they will be sovereign, but where is the guarantee? Will there be a constitution or...

[Kravchuk, interrupting] All this depends on us. I have said from the very beginning that if we respect the principles inherent in the Minsk document, and do not interpret them each according to his interests but instead live together and consider the interests of all the members, then there is a guarantee. If every state starts to interpret things in its own way by diluting, adding to, or washing out these principles, then, of course, we shall have a situation where someone declares that he already envisages some central structures, someone says that there should be an association with powers of a governing body. If we start doing this, naturally, there will be no commonwealth of independent states. And we should watch out for this, and not only Ukraine, but all the states joining the Commonwealth. We should be very sensitive and attentive to every step that could lead to a revival of centralized power. As soon as this power is revived, independence will be buried. Everyone should realize this very clearly.

[Semenov] I should like to continue this theme with a question from viewer Valeriy Vakimyan of Vyzhgorod. The direct line telephones are working in our studio. Comrade Vakimyan asks: Belarus people have an exellent proverb: The closer the neighbor, the lower the fence. By the way, Yeltsin quoted this at Minsk airport.

[Rudometov] Incidentally, I quoted Yeltsin in Moscow—I do beg your pardon—at Minsk airport. So, here goes: Are fences, varying in height, to be expected in the new Commonwealth as other states join it?

[Kravchuk] Again, the document—I want to refer the listeners and the television viewers to the document all the time—the document stipulates that a mechanism will be defined for the unconstrained movement of citizens; and for a free sphere of information, in other words, an exchange of information. And other economic, political, and military-strategic problems will be tackled in such a way as to refrain from erecting fences and to defend the interests of every people; so that one people cannot suspect another people of wanting to gain any sort of advantage at the expense of somebody else—this is a very important detail, because we have now lived for 70, or just over 70 years within a Union in which it is precisely this kind of suspicion that is still current, embedded in the psychology of the people. Everybody believes that they will be doing a great favor to somebody by taking less than they give to somebody or other. We must put an end to this. Things must only be done upon a voluntary, equal, and equitable foundation.

[Semenov] Leonid Makarovich, a whole package of questions put by our television viewers, interested in your stance with regard to the issue of citizenship, Ukrainian citizenship, and the citizenship of other independent states, members of the Commonwealth, is linked to what you have said. Could not any sort of impediment emerge here to unconstrained contacts, exchange of housing, reunification of families, and so on and so forth? I have here questions from our viewers Smol from Moscow, Gorelkina from Tula, Goltseva from Balashikha, Okuchin from Moscow, and great many others besides. [background noise]

[Kravchuk] Yuliy, excuse me, we have had some sort of superimposition here; we have ancient equipment.

[Semenov] No, I beg your pardon, not here—it is our Moscow directors and technicians who broke through when we were live on air.

[Kravchuk] Because I also heard some foreign languages and I could not hear you because of that.

[Semenov] Well, in that case let me apologize for this superimposition, although I will not now start looking for the guilty parties; once this live broadcast is over, we will get to the bottom of this. My question is this: In connection with what you have said about the fact that there should be no fences, free contacts and so on, many viewers are interested—and I will not repeat their surnames—in the problem of citizenship. Can it never be the case that citizenship of an independent state, Ukraine included, can become an impediment to free contacts, exchange of apartments, reunification of families, and so on and so forth?

[Kravchuk] Not under any circumstances. In the first place, our document makes precise provisions for this. In the second place, the national laws and decisions already passed by the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet provide guarantees for dual citizenship, free movement of people, free exchanges, based, as is the custom in civilized states, on normal, human principles, taking account of the fact that we have been living together for a long time and we will not now start creating divisions among ourselves by erecting fences. If you take national minorities, the Russians, let us say, approximately 12 million live in our republic. I call them a national minority for the sake of example.

Moreover, I want to say that these Russians already have been living here for between 350 and 400 and more years. It is our common land and we have no intention of creating divisions where anyone is concerned, and we should like all this to be taken into account, so that everyone knows this: Our policy does not aim at creating ethnic compartments. The aim is to strive, on equitable and universal human principles, for each people to be independent to tackle their own issues, but to live in friendship and brotherhood with others.

[Rudometov] I wish to clarify an issue. If you do not mind, I will ask: Leonid Makarovich, please tell us, how do you see the Commonwealth of Independent States? Do you see it as a new, independent state, or as an alliance of new states?

[Kravchuk] It is not a state. Nor should it ever become a state. It is a commonwealth—a commonwealth of new states, new states that have come into being, states which are absolutely independent in their foreign and domestic

policies and which jointly tackle questions of common interest to them at present, helping one another in the interests of everyone.

[Rudometov] Thank you.

[Semenov] There is this question.

[Kaymuldinov] The mass media believe that Ukraine will have its own currency. Will this not become a barrier to further economic relations? I have Kazakhstan in mind here. If this happens, how are the Ukrainians resident in Kazakhstan, approximately 1 million of them, to build their relations with the land of their ancestors, Ukraine?

[Semenov] Incidentally, Lavrovich from Kharkov also is interested in this.

[Kravchuk] Well, in the first place, I again wish to recall that the document we have signed in Belarus extends to each state an opportunity for resolving the issue of its national currency, with account being taken of the interests of all the participants of this Commonwealth. After all, if you introduce your national currency with account having been taken of the interests of, say, Russia, or Kazakhstan, it will pose no threat at all. This is said by people who are, again, aroused to say such things either by lack of knowledge, or through imprecise formulation, or through deliberate propaganda. I wish to explain that Ukraine, if it does approach a stage of introducing its national currency, will be doing so having first agreed on its actions with Russia, Belarus, all member states, including Kazakhstan.

There will be no surprises here, because today we have, as it were, been taken unawares by the policy that Russia, among others, intends to implement—I do not want to offend anyone—on the freeing of prices. Such a rapid switch to the freeing of prices was unexpected. We must now quickly review our policy, our conceptual views, on this. But that is not the worst part of it. That can be done. The most difficult thing for us is the fact that we do not have the currency notes needed to raise pay by a factor of three or four times and prices correspondingly. We cannot resolve this unless Russia helps us simply with currency notes.

[Pasak] A question from Kiev. Olga Orfaniya asks: What is the basis of Gorbachev's concern for the fate of Russians living in an independent Ukraine which, in his words, is on the point of trampling on the rights of the national minorities?

[Kravchuk] I consider Mikhail Sergeyevich a politician of world repute. I would simply wish that he and those who repeat this would cease such talk and would cease intimidating people with ethnic wars and bloodshed. I can say with certainty, indeed, that Russians living in the Donbass currently are living just as well as Russians living in Saratov or Orenburg.

[Pasak] But our Russians did not have any such concerns in the past.

[Kravchuk] I will give you just one figure. Twenty-two percent of the people in the Ukraine are Russians. But half the children in Ukraine go to Russian schools. They have their own theaters, their own newspapers, their own opportunities, as they say, for preserving their own language and culture. We took a decision in the Supreme Soviet, and in those regions where there are Russian-speaking populations, we made Russian the state language and the language which will be equally extended there. Thus, there are no grounds whatsoever. This is simply an insignificant number of people pursuing I know not what objective, who are constantly whipping up this issue. I declare that Russians living in our Republic of Ukraine will live just as well—and let me assure you, will live better—than in other regions, including materially, culturally, and with respect to language and other matters.

[Pasak] They are not asking to be defended.

[Kravchuk] That is the point. They are being defended upon the initiative of some insignificant, I repeat, group of people, who obviously are pursuing some far-reaching aims. I would not want Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev to support these people; I would want him to support the main mass of people.

[Semenov] Leonid Makarovich, I have to tell you that in support of what you have said, that the large number of questions we are now getting contains no unease over the fate of the Russian population in Ukraine.

[Kravchuk] Thank you.

[Semenov] But there are many questions about two issues, if you have no objections.

[Kaymuldinov] Yuliy, there are questions here that ought to be asked.

[Semenov] Linked to this problem?

[Kaymuldinov] To this issue and to the speech by Leonid Makarovich. Esteemed Mr. President: We all wash ourselves every day, and many of us do so more than once a day, and having washed ourselves we take a look in the mirror and look to see whether everything is in order. Judge for yourselves how great is the feeling of responsibility here. Of late, many politicians have been forgetting about the responsibility they have for their own words. What do you think about Gorbachev's latest appearance on Ukrainian television? Was it worthy of the country's president? It was just a week ago.

[Kravchuk] When I listened to Mikhail Sergeyevich, I got the impression that it cannot be said that his entire speech was unconstructive in character. There are anxieties, and there are thoughts. However, regarding borders, hints, and prophecies, I cannot support that, and I do not support what he said about Kazakhstan. He should not have said that as soon as the Union ceases to exist, these five oblasts of Kazakhstan will request to be transferred to Russia. It seems to me that this statement just is not serious, and it is offensive not only to

Ukrainians and the people of Kazakhstan, but also to the Russians living on soil that, for them, has become their native soil. I am sure that they will defend the land on which they live, as well as its culture and language, their well-being, and that of their children and grandchildren. That is inevitable.

[Semenov] Leonid Makarovich, it seems to me that our colleague Tuleubay heard exactly what he wanted to hear. Thank you. And now I want to say what issues attracted most questions from our television viewers, at least where our Moscow studio is concerned. I do not know about the Kiev studio. The foremost of these issues is linked to the status of the Crimea and your stance with regard to the Crimean Tatar people. To avoid me reading out these questions, or listing viewers' names, briefly define your stance with regard to this; I do know that there was a time when things became rather complicated for you when you visited the Crimea as a presidential candidate, but you managed to convince the Crimeans about your stance, both the deputies and the voters.

[Rudometov] Yuliy Aleksandrovich, do forgive me, but please ask for the microphones to be handled more carefully in your studio, because we have a continuous noise in our studio, coming from yours. But, you did get our question?

[Semenov] Yes we did, and we did convey it.

[Kravchuk] I would like to say that I do not have any particular stand; it is the stand of the Crimean people themselves. First, the fact of the matter is that the Crimean people, in their referendum, defined their status as an autonomous republic within Ukraine. Second, I am pleased to note that Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin said in his latest statement that the Crimean issue is a matter for the sovereign Ukrainian state. I welcome Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin's statement that Russia has no problem over external borders. We also support such a stannd.

Regarding the Crimean Tatar people, this issue needs to be resolved one stage at a time. The first stage—that is, the conditions for returning the Crimean Tatars to their homeland—at that stage, which we are currently going through, we need active participation, considering the particularities of the history of the Crimean Tatar people, active participation in those power structures functioning in the Crimea today and which will continue to function after the general election.

[Semenov] Thank you. Another question is linked to this. How do you see the concept of local self-government? You know, our new, independent states have a problem when the power of the center can be replaced by the power of the republican leadership, rather tough power. To what extent, do you think, should the centralized Ukrainian state leadership be combined with the initiatives and the potential of local self-government?

[Kravchuk] I did set out my point of view during the election campaign. What I proceed from is that, at the level of a state, a professional Supreme Soviet, a Cabinet of Ministers, and presidential power ought to exist and function. The Supreme Soviet is the author of the laws, and acts for everyone. The president guarantees the mechanism of the execution of these laws through his decrees and other decisions [indistinct shouting in the background], while the structures of presidential power and self-governing authorities, elected by the people on the basis of the principles of a multiparty system—authorities that tackle all issues of local life—are active locally.

So, that is what the structure is like. It ensures, first, precision; second, it creates certain guarantees so that presidential power does not exceed its limit. This is of great importance for our young and fragile democracy, because a people must not be dependent on a good or bad president. They must and can depend only on the laws, the Constitution, and the normative acts. Everyone is subject to the Constitution and the law.

[Pasak] Leonid Makarovich, here, in Kiev, we have very many questions. This is understandable—they are being raised by people to their own president. Ukrainian television viewers have very many questions. Here is a question from Aleksey Velikorodov from Kiev. One of the main questions worrying the world community is the question of Soviet nuclear weapons. The press is interpreting the Belovezhskaya Pushcha agreement in different ways. Some are talking of joint control and others of centralized control. But, these are not one and the same thing, are they?

[Kravchuk] I agree. Therefore, we decided that, we decided—we agreed in the Belovezhskaya Pushcha—that until the complete destruction of nuclear weapons, including both strategic and tactical ones, all the states would assist one other in tackling these questions, so that eventually they become nuclear-free states and scrap these weapons completely. In the stage up to their complete destruction, there will be a mechanism for control over the nonuse of nuclear weapons, over their destruction. This control will be political. In other words, all the states on whose territory there are nuclear weapons—temporarily, I stress—will cooperate in this control.

The possibility of using nuclear weapons also will be determined by a political agreement among the presidents of the states having nuclear weapons on their territory. In other words, the control in this instance will be exercised from a single center, but it will also be collective, for a political solution of this question. However, for us, I stress that the most important thing is control over nonuse rather than use. We are for destruction rather than production, although there may appropriate nuances in both cases.

[Pasak] Thank you. I do beg your pardon, but I would like to read out yet another group of questions, for there are very many of them on this subject.

[Semenov] Viktor Vladimirovich, Viktor Vladimirovich, can you hear me?

[Pasak] Yes.

[Semenov] Forgive me, but, incidentally, you have just touched on a subject on which there are more questions than on any other. If, however, your next question is connected with another topic, then please forgive me.

[Pasak] Yes, it is connected with another topic.

[Semenov] Then please forgive me. So, you can see how many questions there are regarding the issue of the Ukrainian army, the armed forces, the fate of servicemen, the social conditions, and so on and so forth. I think my Belarus colleague has questions.

[Rudometov] I should like to approach this question a bit from another angle. Well, Minsk has been designated as the conventional center of the Commonwealth of Independent States. Well, you know, all sorts of people still regard the word center as they would in the old days, but it is not said anywhere how it will be created, when it will be created, what organizational structures will be in place; in particular, what I want to know is how they will fit in with the organizational structures currently in existence and, in particular, with the Defense Ministry, all the more so since you now head the Ukrainian armed forces. How, then...

[Kravchuk, interrupting] Let me answer this in chronological order. The first thesis of the reply consists in the fact that a separate agreement will be adopted on military questions. In it, all the details, all the mechanisms of which I have just been speaking, in part, and which are of such interest to our viewers, will be elaborated.

The second question: Together with Marshal Yevgeniy Ivanovich Shaposhnikov, defense minister, we defined precisely the structure, the possible stages of transition and the mechanisms of revamping and reorganizing the armed forces in Ukraine. This is how we see the task: There are military-strategic forces which will be under a unified military-strategic command. There are air, naval, and land forces which do not belong to the military-strategic forces, or the military-strategic deterrent forces. We will establish our own Ukrainian armed forces on the basis of these forces. They will not be large in terms of numerical strength. We....[Kravchuk changes thought] Precisely on the basis of these armed forces.

Thus, we have a clearly defined structure. We do not encroach on the military-strategic sphere. We will only be interested, again, in control, in knowing what is taking place on the territory of Ukraine, in their deployment, their movement. We should know about appointments and releases from duty of military commanders. They are on our soil and we are responsible for it, not just to our own people, but also to the entire world community. The structure has been defined and there is no danger here at all, provided there is a will.

We will be acting on the basis of the law, of the adopted normative acts of Ukraine, interacting with precision and agreeing all our decisions with the Commonwealth states and with the currently existing Defense Ministry. It is clear that after we have concluded our agreement, this structure will undergo changes. But—and here I am expressing my own point of view—there can be no doubt at all that there will be a commander in chief and a general staff in charge of the military-strategic forces.

[Semenov] What will the size of the national armed forces be? The press gives a figure of 400,000. Evidently there will be naval developments, too. Reasonable sufficiency, some kind of balance...

[Kravchuk, interrupting] At this stage we will not be proceeding on the basis of that principle in view of the fact that the strategic umbrella covers everyone. It is defending everyone's interests, and every state covered by this umbrella must participate in ensuring it. This is a normal phenomenon. Stemming from this, our own armed forces cannot be based on the principle of reasonable sufficiency at 0.8 or 0.9 percent. They will be determined by us after the USSR Defense Ministry, which exists at present, gives us a precise and clear definition of what relates to the military-strategic forces and gives us a distinct and clear definition of how many and what groups of nonstrategic forces there are in Ukraine currently. We will determine this and will publicize how many there will be in our army, and how many divisions and what military districts there will be. Everything will be done, as they say, under conditions of full pluralism and full glasnost.

[Pasak] Leonid Makarovich, I should now like to return to a topic with which I began. Our television viewers, Ukrainian viewers, persist with their requests to return to the topic of certain people spreading rumors and fanning up passions. Here is a question from Viktor Semashko, a topographer from Kiev. How do you appraise the fact that the former center's mass media are currently featuring more and more people who, it would seem, are clever and who assert that Ukraine has a sugar surplus, while there is none in Moscow. Even in today's MOSKOVSKIYE NOVOSTI, political expert Yevgeniy Ambartsumov peddles this idea again. Your appraisal of statements like this?

[Kravchuk] It is, well, the self-same appraisal. They are all the time trying to fan up suspicions and to fan up a feeling of, well, some sort of lack of respect toward one another, I would say. This is a very dangerous thing. I already have had occasion to speak about this. At a news conference, I gave journalists a document. Incidentally, it also was published in IZVESTIYA. It said that Ukraine already has overfulfilled its plans for the deliveries to Russia and Moscow of margarine and sunflower

oil and that it is concluding the fulfillment of its obligations with regard to sugar. There are certain complications with meat and milk—only certain complications—but we again stated that we would fulfill our obligations under, of course, one condition: That the other side also fulfills its obligations toward Ukraine. This is because we cannot today reply to these enterprises and others and say that, for instance, oil, or gas, or fuel oil, and so on are in short supply.

That is to say: We will fulfill our obligations. But the assertion that warehouses are bursting with sugar in Ukraine, while others have none, already has become, I would say, dangerous as far as the preservation of good relations is concerned. It must simply be removed from discussion. Ukraine delivers the same quantities of its own sugar, which it manufactures from its own raw materials, to other republics. We now no longer get raw materials from Cuba. At one time, we produced more than 2 million tonnes of sugar from these materials. If there are no raw materials, we cannot produce this sugar. We, too, have our problems: Factories are waiting, production capacities have been readied, but there is no raw material.

[Pasak] With regard to the supposed surplus of sugar in Ukraine, I have, for some reason, seen more and more frequently long lines for sugar in our...

[Kravchuk, interrupting] And for meat, and for milk, and we, too, have to explain to our people why things are happening this way. That is to say, there is no need to exacerbate these issues. Nor are there any grounds for it at all. I can extend my sympathy to the Muscovites, but they surely know better than me that up to now they have lived at the expense, mainly, of exports, or, to be more correct, of imports of meat, milk and butter alike. But there is none of this now. Ukraine cannot on its own provide for everyone, including such large cities as Moscow, as Leningrad [as heard], although, I repeat, we are fulfilling our obligations. Documents bear witness to this.

[Pasak] Leonid Makarovich, I want to end my group of questions with one about your attitude toward next Saturday's meeting in Alma- Ata, which has been discussed in the press.

[Kravchuk] You know, I favor productive meetings wherever they are held, but I would like to establish the precise status of this meeting. If the purpose of this meeting is to sign a document, then I want to know why I have to attend the signing of documents. Where is my place? Am I to stand behind the signatories? What is my role? To persuade them of something? There is no need. They have decided already at the Ashkhabad meeting, and I say thank you to them for that.

Therefore, I think the correct thing to do, both politically and in all other respects, would be to act as follows: The states that decided to attend the Ashkhabad meeting, the ones that want to join the Belarus agreement, must sign it this week. What should happen in Alma-Ata on 21 December is not the signing, but the first meeting of the new Commonwealth, at which specific issues should be settled. Otherwise, people will not understand why we began something in Minsk and now are continuing it in Alma-Ata. Why do I have to sign the document again when it already has been ratified? They should adopt the following plan. Sign it as equal cofounders—all without exception—and then hold the first meeting in Alma-Ata for the settling of absolutely specific questions.

[Semenov] Leonid Makarovich, Leonid Makarovich, I thank you. Time waits for no one, not even presidents. You understand that. The time set aside for us to be on the air is running out. On behalf of our viewers, participants in this broadcast, allow me to thank you sincerely and to wish you success. We have here good wishes for you. There is a tremendous volume of sociological material at our disposal, and we will endeavor to tidy it up and to have it sent to your press service so that in your practical activities you might be able somehow to take account of it.

[Kravchuk] Thank you.

[Semenov] Yes, in conclusion, I want to tell our listeners and viewers that in a week, at the same time, we shall be meeting live, on air, Stanislav Stanislavovich Shushkevich, chairman of the Belarus Supreme Soviet, and the meeting will have a similar format. Thank you again to our collocutors in Kiev, to my colleagues and to you, esteemed viewers.

[Pasak] Yes, Yuliy Aleksandrovich, 10 seconds left so please excuse me. Leonid Makarovich, on behalf of our viewers, too, I want to wish you a happy week. This is because he was born under the sign of Capricorn, and astrologers forecast a hard week for him, but a very successful one, in company with friends and allies.

[Kravchuk] I, too, if you will let me, want to thank viewers and everyone who took part in our meeting and to recall that in two weeks we shall be saying farewell to this year. The year, the next year, will be a difficult and complicated one. I am, however, confident that it will bring us new victories, new hopes. They will become reality without fail if we are all together, respecting one another, tolerating one another, listening to one another; we will then achieve real successes without fail.

[Semenov] Thank you and good-bye.

Kravchuk Decrees Formation of Armed Forces

LD1312212191 Kiev Radio Kiev Network in Ukrainian 0600 GMT 13 Dec 91

["Decree of the president of Ukraine on the Armed Forces of Ukraine"—read by announcer]

[Text] With the purpose of ensuring the defense capacity of the Ukraine, combat readiness of the troops, maintaining discipline and law and order among personnel

and imposing a controlled character in the process of reforming groups of troops, I decree:

1. In accordance with the law of the Ukraine on defense of the Ukraine and the law of the Ukraine on the Armed Forces of the Ukraine, to create the Armed Forces of the Ukraine on the basis of the troops of the Kiev, Odessa, and Sub-Carpathian military districts, the forces of the Black Sea fleet and other military formations deployed on Ukrainian territory, except the troops which compose the strategic forces of containment. All this work should be carried out stage by stage in accordance with the concept of defense and creating the Armed Forces of the Ukraine approved by the Supreme Soviet of the Ukraine.

2. To establish that the minister of defense of the Ukraine should be subordinate in performing functional duties to the President of the Ukraine without an intermediary. He is charged with the responsibilities of the commander of the Armed Forces of the Ukraine.

3. The minister of defense of the Ukraine is to organize, during the transitional period until the creation the Armed Forces of the Ukraine is finished, direct administration of the troops deployed on the territory of the Ukraine.

4. The minister of defense of the Ukraine is to organize strict control over the condition of the troops, their planned redeployments, relocation military machines, armaments and property.

5. The minister of defense of the Ukraine is to submit to the president of the Ukraine for approval not later than 20 January 1992 the plan of creating the structures of the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

6. The decree should be made known to all military units and establishments and announced to personnel.

7. The decree comes into effect on the day of signing.

[Signed] Kravchuk, the president of the Ukraine.

Parliament Legislates Armed Forces Structure

LD1312194891 Moscow TASS in English 1834 GMT 13 Dec 91

[By UKRINFORM-TASS correspondent Sergey Balykov]

[Text] Kiev December 13 (TASS)—The Ukrainian parliament has approved the proposed "concept of defence and building of the republican armed forces", which envisages a Ukrainian armed forces and units of the collective strategic defence on Ukrainian territory.

The stationing of the collective strategic defence forces on Ukrainian territory shows the degree of the republic's participation in the elaboration of strategy of the common military doctrine of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

The Ukrainian armed forces shall be formed from large Soviet military groupings stationed on Ukrainian territory and formations brought to the republic from East Europe. Their strength will be reduced gradually.

The republican armed forces shall include three arms of service: the army, the air force and air defence, and the navy. The army will also include the border troops, the national guard and civil defence formations. The overall strength of the units will not exceed 400-420 thousand people.

Stricter requirements have been introduced as to the degree of combat and mobilization preparedness and the forces' ability to repulse an aggression until a conflict is settled with political methods.

Ukraine plans to become a neutral and non-nuclear state, participate in the fulfillment of all treaties and agreements on the non-use of nuclear weapons, and contribute to the ratification of corresponding agreements between the USA and the USSR.

There will be four republican armed forces ruling bodies: the president-commander-in-chief, the Ukrainian Defence Council, the Ukrainian defence minister and the Ukrainian armed forces' general headquarters.

The concept determines the procedure of the forces' financing, material and technical support, and recruitment, including those in the transitional period.

The local power bodies shall include defence and state security structures to contribute to the formation of the military budget at all levels, the provision of mobilization preparedness and creation of decent social conditions for servicemen.

The document envisages large budget allocations for the needs of defence, and points out to the need for the development of the Ukrainian military production.

The fact that Ukraine has a wide net of military educational establishments will enable the successful development of military science and training of military specialists of various professions.

The concept ensures the social protection of servicemen, who are to preserve all rights and benefits. Representatives of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet plenipotentiaries' institution will protect the interests of soldiers. A department of social protection will be set up at the republic's Defence Ministry with the same aim.

Servicemen, who join the armed forces voluntarily and on contract, will have the right to launch private businesses in their spare time.

The Ukrainian Supreme Soviet's resolution, "On the Concept of Defence and Building of the Ukrainian Armed Forces" grants the "PEOPLE'S ARMY" newspaper the status of the central organ of the Ukrainian Defence Ministry.

The newspaper is the successor of the "LENINSKOYE ZNAMYA" publication of the Kiev military district.

Defense Minister on Nuclear Arms Control

LD1312225191 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1900 GMT 13 Dec 91

["TV Inform" interview with Colonel General of the Air Force K.P. Morozov, Ukrainian defense minister, by correspondent L. Ilchenko, date and place not given—recorded; introductory paragraph read by program presenter Sergey Medvedev]

[Excerpts] Mikhail Gorbachev had telephone conversations with Boris Yeltsin and Leonid Kravchuk today. The latter took place after the Ukraine president had declared himself commander in chief of the republic's armed forces. [passage omitted]

Now, to the position of Ukraine.

[Ilchenko] Among the first practical steps in establishing a true independence of the Ukraine was the decree issued by Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk, on Ukraine's armed forces, which says, among other things, that all the armed forces on the republic's territory will be transferred to the jurisdiction of Ukraine Ministry of Defense.

[Video shows Ilchenko addressing Morozov] Konstantin Petrovich, how would you comment upon this fact?

[Morozov] Ukrainian President Leonid Makarovich Kravchuk made this decision in order to implement consistently the decisions of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet on the creation of our own armed forces. This decision was made in accordance with the existing situation. This event completes the stage at which the juridical basis for the establishment of our own armed forces was being formed. It was dictated by our wish to provide legal foundations for the military through a reform of the group of forces stationed in the Ukraine into our own armed forces.

This reform will be implemented according to the juridical basis, on the basis of an agreement with the General Staff, with Marshal Shaposhikov, with the participation of representatives of the working group, and with the participation of representatives of the staffs and command of the military districts. The group of forces in the Ukraine has two levels: strategic forces and the forces which ensure their functioning will be subordinate to a single command; the structure of the command will be worked out through a special agreement which will be signed by the presidents of the Commonwealth.

[Ilchenko] Can we say now that President Leonid Kravchuk will have his hand on the control panel of the strategic weapons in the Ukraine?

[Morozov] The united strategic forces that will belong jointly to the countries of the Commonwealth will be implemented by a body which will be set up according to a decision of the presidents of these states, while the presidents themselves will be taking part in consultations and in conferences.

[Ilchenko] Konstatin Petrovich, can all the countries and peoples be sure that a nuclear missile will never be launched from Ukrainian territory?

[Morozov] Absolutely.

On Preserving Arms Command

LD1312230391 Moscow TASS in English 2037 GMT 13 Dec 91

[By UKRINFORM-TASS correspondent Sergey Balykov]

[Text] Kiev December 13 TASS—The centralized command of the strategic forces stationed on Ukrainian territory will be preserved, Ukrainian Defence Minister Colonel-General Konstantin Morozov and Chairman of the Ukrainian Parliament Commission on Defence and State Security Vasiliy Durdinets told a news conference here today.

The news conference focused on results of Leonid Kravchuk's meeting with republican supreme military commanders, and new laws on defence building.

The procedure to control the strategic forces will be elaborated by joint efforts of members of the Commonwealth of Independent States so that to prevent the use of nuclear weapons from Ukrainian territory.

The long-range aviation and part of the air defence formations will remain under centralized command. Same goes to part of the Black Sea Fleet, which supports the strategic deterrence forces. The rest will be the Ukrainian fleet.

As for other formations, they will serve as a basis for the creation of the Ukrainian armed forces through their gradual reduction and establishment of their own management structures.

Asked about prospects for an agreement on collective security between the founders of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Durdinets noted: "We have not discussed this issue. However, regular consultations had been held with representatives of the Russian and Belarussian parliaments before the Commonwealth agreement was signed. We will continue these consultations."

Republic 'Ready' for Nonproliferation Treaty

LD1312231191 Moscow TASS in English 1716 GMT 13 Dec 91

[By UKRINFORM correspondent Sergey Bibik]

[Text] Kiev December 13 TASS—Ukraine stands for large-scale cooperation with the European Economic Community member-states and would like to join the

European structures in the near future, Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk stressed during his talks with Christian Croner, ambassador of the Netherlands and an E.C. official.

The E.E.C. representative expressed his interest in the Ukraine's and the new Commonwealth's stand on strategic nuclear arms. According to Kravchuk, Ukraine is ready to join the Non-Proliferation Treaty and to eliminate it [as received] completely on its territory.

'All' Nuclear Arms To Be Destroyed in 7 Years

LD1412000391 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 2300 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Text] Ukrainian Foreign Minister Anatoliy Zlenko has told his Bulgarian counterpart, Stoyan Ganev, in Sofia that Ukraine is going to destroy all the nuclear weapons on its territory within the coming seven years, and if other nations offer it material aid it will take it three to five years to destroy the nuclear hardware.

Kravchuk Appeals For End to Dnestr Conflict

LD1512133691 Kiev Radio Kiev Network in Ukrainian 0600 GMT 15 Dec 91

["Text" of statement by Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk on the Moldova crisis, issued in Kiev; date of issue not given—read by announcer]

[Text] I learned with deep concern about the tragic events in Moldova. The fact that human blood has been shed cannot be justified. I have profound confidence that whatever the problems may be they can be solved peacefully at a negotiating table. Moldova, as well as the Ukraine, is a multiethnic state. We believe that human rights, those of ethnic minorities, must be fully respected in accordance with the generally accepted norms of international law; without it, a law-governed, democratic community cannot be built. The presidents of the Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus expressed their position on this issue in the 8 December statement on the events in Moldova. I appeal to representatives of the conflicting parties to stop the bloodshed and show patience and common sense. The Ukraine is ready to assist negotiations with the aim of reaching an understanding and resuming peace and calm in sovereign Moldova.

President Receives Special Japanese Envoy

LD1312165991 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1506 GMT 13 Dec 91

[By UKRINORM-TASS correspondent Anatoliy Grigoryev]

[Text] Kiev, 13 Dec (TASS)—The Japanese Government attributes great significance to the fact that the independence of the Ukraine has been proclaimed on the basis of the will of the entire people. Hirokazu Arai, special representative of the Government of Japan, stated this today during a conversation with Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk.

The Ukraine, said Leonid Kravchuk, is striving to take up a worthy place first and foremost in European structures. At the same time, it is hoping to promote close contacts with other states as well. Japan's economic experience appears extremely valuable. The president added that we think the Ukraine can be a place for the application of capital by Japan and a market for Japanese goods.

Leonid Kravchuk confirmed the intention of the Ukraine to become a neutral, nuclear-free state and to exercise strict control over the nuclear weapons on its territory until they are completely destroyed.

Armenia

President Forms National Security Council

NC1312185591 Yerevan Radio Yerevan Network in Armenian 1730 GMT 13 Dec 91

["Decree Issued by the President of the Armenian Republic on the Formation of a National Security Council Attached to the Office of the President"—place and date of issue not given]

[Text] A National Security Council attached to the Office of the President of the Armenian Republic will be formed with the following composition: The president of the Armenian Republic; chairman of the Supreme Soviet; the vice president and prime minister; the president's national security adviser; the president's domestic policy adviser; the interior, defense and foreign ministers; and the head of the republic's State Directorate for National Security.

[Signed] Levon Ter-Petrosyan, president of the Armenian Republic

Azerbaijan

Declaration on Union 'Discontinuation' Approved

LD1312221591 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 1743 GMT 13 Dec 91

["Politics" feature]

[Text] The Azerbaijani Supreme Soviet National Council approved the declaration of three Slavic states on discontinuation of USSR as subject of international law.

The resolution adopted by the Council also stresses that Belarus, the RSFSR, and Ukraine are 3 states out of 4 which founded the USSR in 1922. Under the resolution, published on December 13, deputy committees are also entrusted to hold consultations with the government executives to bring in line the status of the USSR Armed Forces units located in the republican territory with the act on state independence of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and to regulate financial and property issues with the republics of the former Union. The Supreme Soviet session also decided to discuss the issue of creation of a union of independent states to clarify republican attitude to the CIS [Commonwealth of Independent States].

President Signs Decree on Internal Troops

LD1412134991 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian 1200 GMT 14 Dec 91

[Text] President Mutalibov has signed a decree creating internal troops of the Internal Affairs Ministry of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the basis of units of the internal troops of the USSR Internal Affairs Ministry deployed on its territory. The decree says that these troops have been created in order to strengthen the protection of citizens' rights and interests from criminal encroachments, to strenthen public order, and to ensure the protection of state facilities and corrective labor institutions.

Romania Recognizes State Independence

LD1212211191 Moscow Central Television First Program Network in Russian 1900 GMT 12 Dec 91

[From the "TV Inform" newscast]

[Text] Romania has decided to recognize the state independence of Azerbaijan and has expressed its willingness to develop friendly relations with it on the basis of the UN Charter and the principles of international law.

Reportage Highlights Further Unrest in NKAO

Current Fighting Updated

NC1212161891 Yerevan ARMENPRES International Service in Armenian 1215 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Text] Yerevan, 12 Dec (ARMENPRES)—The situation is exceedingly tense in Martuninskiy Rayon. The YERKIR paper reports that Azerbaijanis from Amiranlar village opened artillery fire on Martuni city and the military headquarters at 0600 on 11 December. One soldier was injured. The troops responded by opening gunfire on the Azerbaijani village, and according to unconfirmed reports, a few Azerbaijanis were killed and injured.

Fierce combat has taken place in Shaumyanovskiy [Geranboyskiy] Rayon. Three freedom fighters died and Armenian Davit Sargsyan, 20, was injured during the attack on Todan and Sarysu: Arayik Galstyan, 32; Meruzhan Sargsyan, 36; Hamlet Minasyan, 36, who died in hospital after undergoing surgery.

As of the morning of 11 December, Stepanakert came under heavy attack from artillery and "Alazan" missiles. The freedom fighters launched a counter operation in which the Azerbaijani armed forces' headquarters in Kirkidzhan were annihilated and the school set afire.

According to report from Mardakert, a massing of Azerbaijani armed forces has been observed around Kichan. The Azerbaijanis are concentrating their forces in the Azerbaijani villages surrounding Stepanakert on four sides.

Shukyur Rzayev, assistant general prosecutor of Azerbaijan, was abducted from the prosecutor's office in Nagorno-Karabakh on 14 November. The Armenians had intended to exchange him for the Armenian freedom fighters in Shusha Prison.

YERKIR also reports that there was a [prisoner] exchange on 11 December. Six Armenians—Yura

Peetrosyan, Pavel Voskanov, Samvel Babayan, Eldar, and Khrachik, and Roman Nasibyans—were released from Shusha prison.

The 1st company of the Azerbaijani National Army has taken an oath of loyalty to the president [of Azerbaijan] and has been dispatched to Nagorno-Karabakh.

The All-Union Radio reports that on 10 December, a group of armed Azerbaijanis stopped a VAZ-469 vehicle belonging to the Transcaucasia border troops. The Azerbaijani guerrillas seized the arms in the vehicle and let the servicemen go free.

Rayon Chief Reportedly Killed

NC1312154491 Yerevan ARMENPRES International Service in Armenian 1215 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Text] Based on information from Nagorno-Karabakh, Russian Radio has reported that M. Gyuzalov, head of Shushinskiy Rayon's executive organ, was shot dead in his office the evening of 11 December.

Observers Appeal to Yeltsin

NC1312203091 Yerevan Radio Yerevan Network in Armenian 1730 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Text] A group of independent observers, which followed the course of the 10 December referendum in the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, has appealed to Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin, noting that Azerbaijan's armed aggression against the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh is intensifying. For the last three years, the Army units loyal to Gorbachev always helped the [Azerbaijanis] and brought about the forced mass deportation of residents from Getashen, Martunashen, and other Armenian-inhabited villages.

The authors of the appeal write: While flying in helicopters on our way back from Nagorno-Karabakh, we sat on coffins. Some of the victims we had seen alive in the morning.

Russians also are among Nagorno-Karabakh's defenders. One of them, an 18-year-old man from Kazan, told us that many young Russian men want to assist the people of Nagorno-Karabakh. That filled our hearts with pride for Russia.

Through their words, the observers appeal to Yeltsin not as the heir of the Gorbachev administration, but as the heir of our great Russian Government, which, according to the 1813 Gulistan treaty, has responsibilities toward the people of Nagorno-Karabakh. We believe that Russia must confirm its readiness to fulfill the Gulistan treaty and thus become the guarantor of peaceful lives for the people of Nagorno-Karabakh, the appeal states, and adds: At present, we have grounds to believe that the Army units are getting ready to leave Nagorno-Karabakh. But, before the withdrawal, the Army is morally bound to return to the Armenians the 24 villages taken from them with Army assistance. That Army, which submits to the orders of its own president, is obliged to become the guarantor of the Armenian population's secure return to their native villages.

We request you, Boris Nikolayevich, to appeal to the Azerbaijani Government to halt the armed operations immediately and to solve all the problems through peaceful means.

By so doing, you would prove to the entire world that you are the true heir of the great Russia, a person responsible for upholding the international acts it has signed.

Turkey Asked To Mediate

NC1312205391 Yerevan Radio Yerevan Network in Armenian 1950 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Text] The statement made 11 December in Baku by Azerbaijani Prime Minister Gasanov that Azerbaijan would welcome Turkey's mediation in solving the Nagorno-Karabakh problem received an unequivocal reply from the Turkish capital.

TURKISH DAILY NEWS reports today that Gasanov has said the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh is getting worse and that Turkey's mediation could resolve that problem.

Commenting on that statement, the Turkish Foreign Ministry spokesman noted that Ankara has received no official request concerning Turkey's mediation in solving the Nagorno-Karabakh problem. He said: We are supporting the establishment of peace and stability in Transcaucasia, and if such a request is received, we will examine it.

The paper notes that Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan had made a similar statement two months ago in an interview in Yerevan with Turkish television. At the same time, the Foreign Ministry spokesmen declared that Armenia has made no official request for Turkish mediation.

Council Urges International Calm

OW1212160591 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1450 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The National Council of the Azerbaijani Supreme Soviet has issued a statement December 11th urging all countries and international organizations to keep calm and prevent hasty actions in relation to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

"All acts adopted in Nagorno-Karabakh in violation of the Azerbaijani Constitution and laws have no judicial authority and their recognition will be considered as a hostile action against Azerbaijan and an interference in its internal affairs," the statement points out.

It also says that since illegal actions (elections, opinion polls, referendums, etc.) are being taken in Nagorno-Karabakh, Azerbaijan has to undertake measures to liquidate the seat of destabilization and terrorism. One of them was the decision of the National Council to abolish the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region.

MVD Chief on Request To Oust Armenians

NC1312183891 Yerevan ARMENPRES International Service in Armenian 1215 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Text] Yerevan, 13 Dec (ARMENPRES)—According to reports appearing in the [Azerbaijani] republican press, the Azerbaijani National Council has assessed the holding of the referendum in Nagorno-Karabakh as an intrigue. NEZEVISIMAYA GAZETA correspondent Mehtiyev has reported that the Azerbaijani prosecutor general has been instructed to institute criminal charges against "those officials in Nagorno-Karabakh who have put into effect the unconstitutional decision."

The correspondent has, however, noted that the implementation of that order will not be easy. Gandzhe city soviet Chairman Sadikhov has appealed to Vasiliy Savvin, commander of the USSR Internal Affairs Ministry's [MVD] Internal Troops and has asked him "to help oust all the Armenian extremists from Nagorno-Karabakh." Savvin has derisively replied: "Nothing will be achieved by your effort in that direction."

Continued Troop Presence 'Pointless'

NC1312214091 Yerevan Radio Yerevan Network in Armenian 1950 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Text] According to the SNARK news agency, Guseynov, chairman of the Republican Organizational Committee of Nagorno-Karabakh, has said the office of the [Soviet] internal troops' command has decided to withdraw its subunits from Nagorno-Karabakh.

Savvin, commander of the USSR Internal Affairs Ministry's troops, in an interview with Azerbaijani television, has stated that the continued stationing of troops in Nagorno-Karabakh is pointless. Savvin said the conflict can be resolved only through bilateral talks.

According to reports from the President Ayaz Mutalibov's office, preliminary work is being carried out there for resuming talks with Armenia.

'Major Bloodshed' If Troops Leave

NC1412082591 Yerevan ARMENPRES International Service in Armenian 1215 GMT 13 Dec 91

[By Ashot Dzhazoyan from Moscow branch of ARMENPRES]

[Text] Yerevan, 13 Dec (ARMENPRES)—In the opinion of the USSR people's deputy Colonel Vladimir Smirnov, it is time to form UN "Blue Beret" type troops in the former USSR.

In a statement to INTERFAX, V. Smirnov, who was one of the observers at the Nagorno-Karabakh referendum, has noted that because such forces have not yet been set up, the USSR Internal Affairs troops should not leave Nagorno-Karabakh. Otherwise, the colonel thinks, there will be major bloodshed.

Attacks on Soviet Troops Continue

OW1612122391 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1127 GMT 16 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Attacks on Soviet servicemen and Interior Ministry troops continue in Azerbaijan.

As IF [INTERFAX] was told at the press center of the USSR Interior Ministry, at about noon last Saturday [14 December] Azeri militants captured an armoured vehicle that had failed to keep pace with its column 5 kilometers off the airport of Gandja city. Two machine-guns and other weapons in the vehicle were seized. The crewmen were let go.

The seizures of arms and military equipment have become commonplace in Azerbaijan. For instance, Wednesday [11 December] night a group of armed Azeris stole more than 400 units of firearms, ammunition, military equipment and two lorries from the depot of an army unit in Nasosnyy village, a suburb of Sumgait.

The day before a group of USSR Interior Ministry troops engaged in transporting munitions was attacked by armed men in Baku.

Georgia

Republic Recognizes Ukraine's Sovereignty

OW1412053691 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1400 GMT 13 Dec 91

["TV Inform" feature; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Presidium of the Georgian Supreme Soviet has announced its de jure and de facto recognition of the sovereignty state independence and territorial integrity of the Ukrainian Republic as a full-fledged international legal entity. This is seen as Georgia's response to the recognition of its own independence by the Ukraine yesterday.

The Republic of Georgia, says the Presidium's statment, expresses readiness to establish diplomatic relations at embassy level with the independent Ukraine and to promote bilateral political, trade economic, cultural, scientific and technical exchanges at all levels with it.

Leader Invites Chechen President for Talks

LD1512060491 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0500 GMT 15 Dec 91

[Text] Georgian President Zviad Gamsakhurdia has suggested a meeting in Tbilisi with Dzhokhar Dudayev, president of the Chechen Republic. The suggestion came after Dudayev's declaration on the need to create a commonwealth of Caucasus states. President Gamsakhurdia's proposal was given a postive reception.

Prime Minister Calls For Tripartite Meeting

LD1312211291 Moscow TASS in English 1923 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Text] Moscow December 13 TASS—Georgian Prime Minister Gugushvili has suggested a meeting with the Armenian and Azerbaijani premiers to discuss topical political and economic issues of the Transcaucasia.

He called for the convocation of such a meeting before the end of this year, speaking at a news conference here today after the Georgian and Armenian governments signed an agreement on economic, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation for 1992-1995, the Georgian national news agency reports.

Prime Minister Sees Economy in 'Dire Straits'

LD1612101791 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 0900 GMT 16 Dec 91

[Text] The economy of Georgia is in dire straits, said the republic's Premier Gugushvili. There is an acute food shortage and the fuel supply is critically low. Addressing local council executives, Mr. Gugushvili said in these extreme conditions the government is ready to introduce emergency measures. Food is now rationed. There is a ban on taking any foodstuffs out of the republic. The government program has produced a negative reaction of the opposition.

Interior Minister Warns of Possible Coup

LD1512012691 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 2206 GMT 14 Dec 91

[From the "Politics" section]

[Text] According to Georgian interior affairs minister, Soviet Army units stationed in Georgia, may precipitate a new coup. Dilar Khabuliani, Georgian interior affairs minister, in his interview to the republican TV, said that the authorities suspect that the opposition may have entered into an alliance with Soviet Army units. The unease of the powers-that-be is explained by Mr. Khabuliani by possible retaliatory measures of the Army servicemen that may be their response to the December 13 armed attack on the Army car that resulted in a murder of an officer. According to Mr. Khabuliani, armed national guards from the rebel units under the command of Tengiz Kitovani, as well as Russian servicemen in disguise, have appeared in the square adjacent to the government house. In the morning of December 14 the building of the government house has been encircled by tens of trucks loaded with crushed stone and concrete slabs. This measure is taken to defend the legitimate leadership of the republic from actions of the third force.

1 Killed, 8 Injured in Ossetian Violence

LD1612121191 Moscow TASS in English 1135 GMT 16 Dec 91

[By correspondent Valeriy Shanayev]

[Text] Vladikavkaz December 16 TASS—One person was killed and eight people injured as a result of exchanges of fire in South Ossetia last night. Fire was conducted from Georgian villages on the residential areas of Tskhinvali and on the checkpoints of Soviet Interior-Ministry troops. The Ossetian side returned the fire, the press centre of the South Ossetia Information Committee reported.

Missile and artillery bombardment of the district centre of Znauri continued for several hours. According to unconfirmed data, there were casualties as well.

Meanwhile, the stream of refugees from South Ossetia and other areas of Georgia into North Ossetia does not cease. More than 100,000 people have taken refuge in Vladikavkaz and its suburbs.

Attacks Continue on Army Units

LD1512032491 Moscow TASS in English 1808 GMT 14 Dec 91

[By correspondent Albert Kochetkov]

[Text] Tbilisi December 14 TASS—An attack on a school bus, belonging to an Army unit, has been repulsed in the Akhaltsikhskiy region of Georgia, a spokesman for the command of the Transcaucasian Military District reported today. The bus was carrying children of commissioned and non-commissioned officers. The attackers intended to capture them as hostages and later exchange for weapons and ammunition. According to the spokesman, this is the objective of an armed group with a strength of some 100, which began to operate in the region. The origin of the group is unknown. Those people have already kidnapped a non-commissioned officer and keep calling another officer, threatening to deal severely with his family, if he does not supply them with submachine-guns, cartridges and grenades.

Attacks on Army cars and combat vehicles for the purpose of capturing them are continuing. A car of Lieutenant General Anatoliy Nikolaev, deputy chief of staff of the military district, was one of those attacked. Soldiers had to open fire. According to preliminary information, one of

the attackers was killed. A military truck was fired at in the city of Goriy on Friday [13 December]. One soldier was killed and another wounded.

Georgian officials describe these incidents as provocative actions of the armed opposition, aimed at destabilising the situation in the republic. But this explanation does not satisfy the command of the Transcaucasian Military District. Its spokesman made an official statement at a meeting with journalists fully blaming the Georgian president and authorities for the consequences of reply measures taken by the military.

Interrepublic Affairs

Further on Central Asian Meeting in Ashkhabad

Decision on Chernobyl, Aral Regions

LD1312174191 Ashkhabad Radio Ashkabad Network in Russian 1600 GMT 13 Dec 91

["Resolution of heads of states participating in the Ashkhabad summit"—read by announcer]

[Text] We, the heads of Central Asian Republics and Kazakhstan, have examined and discussed the question of the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States. Among these questions we found the most urgent issue is the measures for dealing with the aftermath of the Chernobyl disaster and the Aral tragedy. This is our (?problem) and our common catastrophe. We must remove this together.

To [words indistinct] we have decided to send humanitarian assistance to these regions from each of the republics. By the new year, the children of Chernobyl and the Aral will [words indistinct]. We believe that this sincere economic assistance is not only given to the children as a New Year gift, but at the same time it proves that it is possible to secure strong friendly and fraternal ties among the peoples.

[Signed] Nazarbayev, president of the Republic of Kazakhstan;
Akayev, president of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan;
Nabiyev, president of the Republic of Tajikistan;
Niyazov, president of Turkmenistan; and
Karimov, president of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Next Meeting Set for 21 Dec

LD1312185391 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 1439 GMT 13 Dec 91

[From the "Politics" section]

[Text] According to unofficial sources, meeting of leaders of the former Union republics is, supposedly, to take place in Alma-Ata on December 21. It is unknown as yet whether the an invitation would be sent to the USSR President Mikhail Gorbachev. The parliament of Kazakhstan plans to discuss the text of the statement adopted by the leaders of the Middle Asian republics on December 13 and to make its own proposals to be included into the text of the agreement on establishment of the CIS [Community of Independent States].

Nazarbayev Comments on Documents

PM1312192191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 14 Dec 91 Union Edition p 1

[IZVESTIYA special correspondents V. Ardayev and V. Kuleshov report: "Participants in Ashkhabad Meeting Ready To Become Members of Commonwealth. But With Equal Rights"]

[Text] Ashkhabad—The presidents of the republics of Central Asia and Kazakhstan gathered at 1800 hours 12 December in the Small Hall of the Turkmen Presidential Palace. Approaching midnight, Turkmen President Saparmurad Niyazov summed up the results, concluding: "The document can now be signed."

What is the result? What will the presidents of the republics take away with them from Ashkhabad?—we approached Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev with these questions.

[Nazarbayev] After the discussion we adopted a statement from the leaders of the five republics which says: "We view with understanding the desire of the leaders of the Republics of Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine to create a Commonwealth of Independent States on the site of republics previously deprived of rights." Our main condition is that all republics join the Commonwealth of Independent States with the rights of founders, that is, on an absolutely equal footing. The text of an agreement jointly prepared by us on the creation of a Eurasian commonwealth of independent states has been taken as a base, and I hope that it will be signed by both the leaders of the Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan and those of Belarus, the Ukraine, and Russia. A meeting has been scheduled in Alma-Ata for this purpose, involving all eight leaders of the sovereign republics. I hope it will be held in December.

Saparmurad Niyazov, Islam Karimov, and I have just spoken on the telephone to Boris Yeltsin: He confirmed his desire to take part in the coming meeting. I want to point out that the main comment that we made about the document signed in the Belovezhskaya Forest is the need for it to be given legal, constitutional status, rather than that of a mere initiative, as was the case... But I am totally satisfied with both the results and the course of our meeting. Above all with the fact that we succeeded in securing mutual understanding on the main issues virtually straightaway....

Akayev Says More States To Join

LD1412204891 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1800 GMT 14 Dec 91

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] Kyrgyz President Akayev believes that by 21 December there will be more than eight states in the Commonwealth of Independent States. All the additions to the agreement on cooperation among the independent states proposed by the five participants in the Ashkhabad meeting were agreed by telephone with Boris Yeltsin. The Russian president also briefed Ukraine and Belarus about this.

As for Gorbachev, he has been given a chance to make up his mind, Akayev said. The meeting set for 21 December in Alma-Ata will determine his further role, if the conditions underlying the new Commonwealth suit him. Akayev noted that the Alma-Ata meeting has been

moved from 14 to 21 December so as not to display haste and to be able to agree all the points of the new Commonwealth with the parliaments of the eight republics. But, the view of the president, by that time there will be more of us.

Karimov on 'Unclear' Elements

LD1312145191 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 12 Dec 91 p 2

[A. Kaipbergenov report: "The People Are Tired...."]

[Text] I welcome this agreement on the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Uzbek President I. Karimov said in an interview with PRAVDA's correspondent, because it is structured on the correct basis. These three states formerly set up the 1922 Union and, convinced of the bankruptcy of all attempts to preserve the Union in the form we have today, they stated their determination to form a commonwealth on a totally new basis.

In the opinion of the republic's leader, all the interminable talks and the discussions at Novo-Ogarevo and elsewhere are causing the people heartburn. The people are already tired of the countless drafts and versions and the concomitant struggle. The president expressed regret at the lack of reliable firsthand information about the documents signed in Belarus. Unification on ethnic ground also caused an objection.

I. Karimov dwelt on three elements that, to his mind, are still unclear. First, the problem of the Army, to which young men from other republics are drafted and in which they are continuing to serve. Second, how the concept of a "common economic area" is unfolding. In that situation, what is to be done with the Treaty on the Economic Community signed by the plenipotentiary representatives of 10 republics? Third, the problem of currency. This question may wreck the economy of all republics in the former Union and the negative process may affect the world economy.

It is necessary to sit down and discuss all points of uncertainty in the presence of the leaders of Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine and reach some kind of decision, I. Karimov concluded.

Belarus Chairman Comments

LD1312142591 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1219 GMT 13 Dec 91

[By BELTA correspondent—TASS]

[Text] Minsk, 13 Dec (TASS)—"We are very happy that the ideas contained in the documents signed in the Belovezhskaya Pushcha meeting received the support of five sovereign states at the Ashkhabad meeting." This was stated today by Vyacheslav Kebich, chairman of the Belarus Council of Ministers, in an interview with a BELTA correspondent. This is a great event illustrating the axiomatic truth that the process of reintegration of the former Union republics is irreversible, and will relentlessly develop. The meeting of the leaders of the Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan ended in Ashkhabad today. A statement was adopted which says, inter alia, that the republics are prepared to become equal co-founders of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Asked to comment on a report from Moldova on armed clashes in Pridnestrovye, the head of the Belarus Government stressed that this is regrettably yet another sad point illustrating the extreme need for the states and peoples of the former Union to unite on an equal basis. Stanislav Shushkevich, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Belarus [passage indistinct] said that the events of recent days show great refinement in opposing it. Therefore, there is no cause for complacency. Only when we see everyone putting their signatures to the agreement, can we become fully confident in the success of the process that has been launched.

Officials Cited on Outcome

LD1412182291 Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Networks in Russian 1630 GMT 14 Dec 91

[Report by correspondent Mukhtar Ganiyev in Ashkhabad on 14 December, including recorded comments by Sergey Aleksandrovich Tereshchenko, Kazakhstan prime minister; G.V. Koshlakov, Tajikistan presidential council member; and V.G.Ochertsov, "deputy head of the Government of the Republic of Turkmenistan"; from the "TV Inform" newscast]

[Text] The presidents of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan have been working all day in Ashkhabad. Having supported the Commonwealth of Independent States formed in Minsk, they made their own choice. They have renounced the command of an administrative center that exerts pressure on the independence of the republics. They will join the new commonwealth in the capacity of founders with equal rights.

The joint statement elaborated in Ashkhabad offers amendments to the Minsk agreement. One of the main points is to guarantee equality of rights to all nations and ethnic groups living here. The rights and interests of every individual in the new commonwealth will be protected.

[Tereshchenko] The idea about there being a union of Slav republics and a union of Muslim states—we must leave all that behind. There cannot be any union of Slav or Muslim states. We need a single economic space.

[Koshlakov] I completely agree with what was said by Sergey Aleksandrovich. Ethnic or religious distinctions are of no significance here. What is significant is the conglomerate which has taken shape of peoples living on the territories where they live. We have the same interests, the same business, the same destinies.

[Ochertsov] Taking Turkmenistan as an example, it needs to be said that more than 100 nationalities live, work, and need to be represented here. All of them live with one dream and one thought: the creation of better conditions for their children, for their families, for their peoples. In my opinion, the Ashkhabad meeting and the work of the presidents here permits another step to be taken in the direction of achieving this aim.

Paper Sums Up Results

PM161214439l Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 16 Dec 91 Union Edition p 1

[Correspondent V. Ardayev report: "Ashkhabad Meeting's Results Bring Forth a Sigh of Relief in the Country and the World. One More Hope"]

[Text] Alma-Ata—No sooner had I returned from Ashkhabad than I switched on the television. A news program was on, the main item in which was the Ashkhabad meeting. And this was the general feeling: Maybe something new has emerged that will unify the majority of Kazakhstan's multiethnic citizens. It was a feeling of relief due to the results of the "Central Asian Five" conference.

It has to be said that some rather terrifying forecasts regarding the drawing up of a "Muslim charter" were in the air. To many people the danger that an alternative to the Commonwealth of Independent States would emerge, which would risk severing the living ties that bind people and peoples, seemed more real than ever before. But now it has dispersed—it turned out that fears had been groundlessly whipped up.

The results of the meeting were the signing of a joint statement and the preparation of a draft agreement under which Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan are prepared to join the Commonwealth of Independent States proclaimed in Belovezhskaya Forest. But as was to be expected, they will join provided certain conditions are met. The principal and fundamental condition is that all components of the former USSR joining the Commonwealth of Independent States should enjoy founders' rights.

A typical detail. Two versions of the draft documents prepared by Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, which differed in many ways, were submitted for the attention of participants at the meeting. The key point—concerning admission to the Commonwealth of Sovereign States only on the basis of the Commonwealth founders' rights—appeared in both versions and was adopted without practically any discussion. Figuratively speaking, neither Nazarbayev nor any other leader of the group of five wanted to become the fourth member of the Commonwealth of Sovereign States, but as a group they tried to arrange matters in such a way that each of them could be the first. This would apply not just to the Ukraine, Belarus, or Russia, but to any other potential member of the Commonwealth.

This may sound pompous, but for virtually the first time in recent history collective political wisdom has won out over emotions and ambitions. And it is mainly this that inspires new hope.

The meeting of the group of five produced no disagreements on any basic point, not counting procedural questions about time frames and the ratification procedure for the new agreement. But in the end it did not take long for a constructive compromise to be found even on this point. It was decided that quite soon (a tentative date is 21 December) not five or three but all eight republics will meet in Alma-Ata to sign the new agreement on the Commonwealth of Sovereign States. This agreement will not cancel out the earlier Belarussian one since, in terms of its basic provisions, the agreement's essence remains unchanged. But it will be like making a fair copy. B. Yeltsin's consent to this meeting has already been obtained, only the leaders of Ukraine and Belarus still have to respond.

It is likely that the agreement will be deemed effective after its ratification by the sovereign republics' parliaments, and in Uzbekistan after the nationwide presidential election and referendum on independence that are being held 29 December. If all this happens, we will witness the birth of a fundamentally new trans-state formation—the Eurasian Commonwealth of Independent States, built on a confederative basis and featuring virtually nothing of the former Union. A Commonwealth formed on a purely voluntary and equal basis, which also inspires hope.

"It is time for Gorbachev to stop scaring peoples with stories of inevitable war, famine, and territorial claims from God knows where," N. Nazarbayev said on this matter. "That is actually the way to bring about disaster. The people are tired of worrying and the chronic feeling of uncertainty about what tomorrow will bring. The people need calm confidence both in themselves and their leaders—only then will we be able to properly extricate ourselves from the complex situation prevailing in the country...."

It is good when hope appears—then even waiting takes on a completely new meaning.

Correction to Declaration of Ashkhabad Meeting

LD1312173991

The following correction pertains to the item headlined "Declaration of Ashkhabad Meeting," published in the 13 December Soviet Union DAILY REPORT, p 84:

Page 85, column one, paragraph eight, only sentence should read: ...Republic of Kyrgyzstan

[Signed] R.N. Nabiyev, president of the Republic of Tajikistan

[Signed] President of Turkmenistan S.A. Niyazov

[Signed] I.A. Karimov, president of the Republic of Uzbekistan.... (supplying dropped signature for Tajik president, transposing names of Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan presidents).

Kazakhstan

Nazarbayev Decree on Anticenter Demonstrators

LD1312134491 Alma-Ata Kazakh Radio Network in Kazakh 1055 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Text] Nursultan Nazarbayev, president of the Republic of Kazakhstan, decrees to rehabilitate citizens charged with participation in the events of 17 and 18 December 1986 in Kazakhstan.

On 17 and 18 December 1986, says the decree, in Alma-Ata and certain oblasts democratically minded groups of workers, schoolchildren, and students protested against the dictatorship of the center, which had imposed its representative as leader of the republic [Kolbin, an ethnic Russian, was sent to replace Kunayev] thereby provoking opposition and a negative reaction from the citizens. Many participants were, without justification, subjected to criminal, administrative, and disciplinary charges.

Guided by principles of humanitarianism, objectivity, and justice, the president decrees: Persons subjected to criminal, administrative, and disciplinary charges for taking part in the events of 17 and 18 December 1986 in Kazakhstan are considered rehabilitated.

The decree does not apply to those convicted of deliberate murders or attempted murder of militia officers or people's volunteer militias. The existing order of review of criminal cases applies in these cases.

It is proposed that the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Kazakhstan examine the question of lifting the decrees of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic on giving state awards to servicemen, internal troops, and law and order officers of the republic in connection with the December 1986 events in Alma-Ata as being adopted in error. It is also proposed that the USSR Supreme Soviet lift the decrees of the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet on giving USSR orders and medals to those officials awarded on this occasion for the same reason.

The same decree declares 17 December the day of democratic renewal of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Nazarbayev Issues Decree on Customs Committee

LD1312195691 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1055 GMT 13 Dec 91

[By KAZTAC correspondent Konstantin Borodinov]

[Text] Alma-Ata, 13 Dec (TASS)—Nursultan Nazarbayev, president of the Republic of Kazakhstan, today issued two decrees promoting the defense of the republic's economic interests. A customs committee, to which all customs bodies of the former USSR located on the territory of Kazakhstan are subordinate, has been set up under the president. Also reorganized in accordance with the new tasks is the system of economic links, which is intended to facilitate more actively the stable development of intrarepublican and interstate contacts. A regulation on sending raw materials and goods out of the republic by quota and license only is to be introduced in the new year.

Supreme Soviet Adopts Law on Independence

LD1612161791 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1542 GMT 16 Dec 91

[By KAZTAG correspondent Konstantin Borodinov]

[Text] Alma-Ata, 16 Dec (TASS)—The law on the state independence of Kazakhstan has been adopted today at the meeting of the republic's Supreme Soviet. According to the document, the Republic of Kazakhstan is an independent, democratic state ruled by law. It will enjoy full authority in its territory, as well as determine and implement its internal and foreign policy independently. Its territory within the existing borders is integral, indivisible, and inviolable. The law on state sovereignty proclaims the equality of rights of all citizens resident in the republic. President Nursultan Nazarbayev spoke at the meeting. He congratulated the members of parliament and the entire multiethnic population of Kazakhstan on this historic event.

Parliament Criticizes Gorbachev Statement

OW1412122591 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2025 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Supreme Soviet of Kazakhstan has criticized Mikhail Gorbachev for his statement on television in which the President claimed that during the virgin soil reclamation period in the 50's, five regions of Russia became part of Kazakhstan.

The republican parliament dismissed that statement as "impermissible and crude interference in Kazakhstan's internal affairs."

The Supreme Soviet of Kazakhstan has decided to address a special statement to Mikhail Gorbachev demanding an explanation in the mass media.

Republic's Territorial Indivisibility Asserted

LD1312224291 Moscow All-Union Radio Mayak Network in Russian 2000 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Text] The Kazakhstan Supreme Soviet today adopted a statement in connection with the USSR president's recent interview with Ukrainian Television. The parliamentarians' reaction was provoked by the thesis that

once Russian transferred several oblasts to Kazakhstan. The republic's territory, the statement says, is single and indivisible, as is enshrined in its Constitution, the declaration of state sovereignty, and in the treaty between the RSFSR and Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic signed on 21 November 1990 and the communique on the results of the talks between the delegations of Kazakhstan and Russia of 30 August of this year.

Kyrgyzstan

Supreme Soviet Supports Commonwealth Decision

LD1412225891 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 2100 GMT 14 Dec 91

[Text] Kyrgyz President Askar Akayev, at a meeting with the participants in the republic's Supreme Soviet session on 14 December, spoke on the procedure of the meeting of the presidents of the Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan held in Askhabad. Our correspondent in Bishkek, Talan Dzhumabayev, reports:

[Dzhumabayev] Summarizing the results of the meeting, one can say confidently that the republic's legislative body has supported the president and Akayev will arrive in Alma-Ata on 21 December with the power to sign the documents on joining the Commonwealth of Independent States [CIS]. Answering a question, Askar Akayev said that there is no other way for the Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan but to become members of the Commonwealth.

The issue of a possible creation of an alternative Turkestan Union was not even put forward. The leaders are very well aware of the fact that due to different reasons, such an association would not be stable. Only the presence of the Slav republics can become a stabilizing factor for the Central Asian republics and a basis for a way out of the economic crisis. Thus, the Central Asian republics and Kazakhstan most likely will sign the agreement regarding the CIS.

President's Decree Sets Up National Guard

LD1312165191 Bishkek Radio Bishkek Network in Russian 1400 GMT 13 Dec 91

[Decree by the President of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan on the creation of a National Guard of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan; place and date not given]

[Text] In accordance with the declaration of state independence of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan and with the aim of ensuring the security of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan as a sovereign state, I hereby decree the creation of the National Guard of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan and the confirmation of appended provisions on the National Guard of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan.

The Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan is to ensure the financing of expenses to maintain the National Guard of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan from 1 December 1991. It is to allocate the necessary buildings, facilities, and territory for the stationing of subunits of the National Guard of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan. By 1 February 1992, the National Guard of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan is to be brought up to strength.

The decree is signed by Akayev, president of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan.

Transportation Suffers From Fuel Shortage

LD1312114291 Moscow Central Television Vostok Program and Orbita Networks in Russian 1630 GMT 8 Dec 91

[Report by correspondent V. Fedorov from the "TV Inform" newscast]

[Text] In Manas airport in the Kyrgyz capital, tens of flights have been cancelled. Somehow, only the busiest routes keep going. Air mail, newspapers, and letters are arriving intermittently. There is cold weather, but there is not any kerosene with which to heat.

The motor vehicle situation is no better. Since the beginning of December, the republic has not received a single liter of gasoline, diesel fuel, or black oil [mazut]. There are no spare parts, since over the past 11 months there has been a shortfall of around 300,000 tonnes of petroleum products from Russia, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan. It is not difficult to imagine the threat this holds for a region where 95 percent of passengers and 98 percent of freight are carried by motor vehicles.

Things are the same as far as heating is concerned. Extortionists at coal depots take 500 rubles per motor vehicle from the desperate population.

Karaganda has left the Bishkek thermal power stations without coal. The Osh thermal power stations have enough mazut for 10 days.

Fraternal Uzbekistan is fulfilling the treaty for gas deliveries by just one-fifth. Due to this, hundreds of familiies in Karakul, from which Tashkent draws its electricity, are living in poverty without any hot food. Production is having to be forced, but there are also problems here. The Toktogul reservoir is being worked more intensively, which means that tens of thousands of hectares of land in the neighboring republics may be left without irrigation water in the summer.

Tajikistan

Nabiyev Interviewed on 'Belovezhskaya Action'

PM1312215791 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 12 Dec 91 p 1

["In-Flight Interview" en route to Dushanbe with Tajikistan President Rakhmon Nabiyev by V. Kozhemyako under general headline "Country—Do You Remember Your

Name?"—date of interview not given: "We Must Keep the Union"—first paragraph is Kozhemyako introduction]

[Text] I was flying to Dushanbe to interview the president of Tajikistan. But we met unexpectedly...in the aircraft. Rakhman Nabiyevich Nabiyev was returning from Moscow, where he had a discussion with M.S. Gorbachev 9 December. The question that interested me and that, I think, concerns many people was the attitude toward the Union problem of the leadership of the former Union republics that are now sovereign independent states. This problem was exacerbated following the "Belovezhskaya action." We began our conversation with this point.

[Kozhemyako] Rakhmon Nabiyevich, how did your meeting with the USSR president go?

[Nabiyev] It began after Gorbachev's meeting with Yeltsin and Nazarbayev. Azerbaijan President Mutalibov and Turkmenistan Supreme Soviet Chairman Muradov had a talk with him at the same time. Obviously, the main theme was the new political situation that has developed after the "Belovezhskaya statement."

[Kozhemyako] It would be interesting to know what thoughts you expressed when you discussed this problem.

[Nabiyev] The "Belovezhskaya action" alarmed me. It probably has some positive content too, primarily the fact that Ukraine's leadership has joined in the treaty process. But there are more alarming things. What is particularly worrying? The idea that the statement on the juridical elimination of the USSR might throw us all backward instead of bringing us nearer a constructive solution to the problem. But I am very deeply convinced that the Union must be preserved at all costs. In a new and reformed shape, of course. But this is extremely necessary for all of us. After all, in my opinion all the republics without exception have felt the negative influence of the disintegration of our political and economic ties. Independence and sovereignty are all very well. And this is how things should certainly be. But not at any price! And what does the disruption of formerly well-oiled economic relations lead to? Many of our enterprises—refrigerator plants, the textile industry, transportation, and so forth—are constantly on a strict diet as regards deliveries, and sometimes they are practically on the verge of stopping altogether. Can this really be called order?

Let me say more about one aspect of the matter. The establishment of a commonwealth of independent states has been announced. I can understand that they will be independent, and I understand the idea of a commonwealth as well. But why has emphasis also been put on the fact that it is the Slav states that are joining together? What if the Muslim republics started to unite on the same ethnic or religious principle?... I respect Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin, I have known him for a long time; however, in this case, like some others, he has in my opinion displayed haste and even unpredictability. Together with the other participants in the "Belovezhskaya meeting."

[Kozhemyako] Speaking of the need to preserve the Union, are you merely expressing your own viewpoint, the opinion of the republic's leadership, or that of its people to some extent?

[Nabiyev] Of course, I know and take into consideration the opinion of many people in our republic. The majority opinion, I think. After all, most of us voted for the Union in the all-Union referendum in March. Moreover, the presidential election in which I was elected was held quite recently—24 November. And during the election campaign I said openly and bluntly that I support a renewed Union of Sovereign Republics. And both during campaign meetings and the election itself the majority of Tajikistan's population supported this position of mine with their vote.

[Kozhemyako] Was anything said after the election about the results being rigged in some way?...

[Nabiyev] Well, that's the usual speculation, totally unsubstantiated. Rubbish, to put it simply.

[Kozhemyako] How do you think the exacerbation of the Union issue will end?

[Nabiyev] I think that it's up to the peoples of the republics and their supreme soviets. We, for instance, will immediately hold meetings—with representatives of oblast, city, and rayon ispolkoms [executive committees], with women, and so forth, we will hold consultations. Then we will discuss the new draft Union Treaty and the alternative Belovezhskaya option at a session of the republic's supreme soviet. The question is extremely important and extremely acute. It is ultimately not even a question of Gorbachev—whether he is Union president or not. It is far more serious: It is a question of the future of all our country's peoples. Including our multiethnic republic....

Gorno-Badakhshan Becomes Autonomous Republic

LD1512164191 Dushanbe Radio Dushanbe Network in Tajik 0700 GMT 10 Dec 91

[Text] Many thousands of people who had gathered during the past seven days in Lenin Square, Khorog, left the square. Yesterday an extraordinary session of the soviet of people's deputies of the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast declared the upgrading of the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast to an autonomous republic within the composition of the Republic of Tajikistan—the main demand of the participants of the rally—and called on the parliament of the Republic of Tajikistan to support the decision of the oblast soviet in this regard.

Most people's deputies and participants of the session expressed the opinion that Badakhshan is a part of Tajikistan and that the people of Badakhshan are part of

the noble Tajik people. The establishment of the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Republic does not mean separation from Tajikistan. The people of Badakhshan in the future will become united under the banner of the Republic of Tajikistan and will struggle to revive the traditions of the Tajik nation.

The representatives of the soviet of the Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous republic adopted an appeal addressed to the republican parliament and all the people of Tajikistan. The organizational committee of the rally handed over 90,000 rubles collected during recent days to the treasury of the Republic of Tajikistan.

Turkmenia

Niyazov Cited on Future Treaty With Russia

PM1512160191 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 11 Dec 91 Union Edition p 2

[Correspondent V. Kuleshov report: "Turkmenistan: Deputies Studying Documents"]

[Text] Ashkhabad—The republic's presidential council has examined the statement of the heads of state of the Republic of Belarus, Russia, and the Ukraine and also the agreement to create a Commonwealth of Independent States.

It has been decided to thoroughly study and examine all the information contained in these documents at government level and at a session of the republic's Supreme Soviet, among deputies, and among leaders at oblast and rayon level, and then present a summary to the Turkmen people. The aim of this broad discussion is to see how far the documents adopted coincide with the republic's interests and the law on Turkmenistan's independence.

While refraining from any comments on the statement by the heads of state and the agreement on the creation of the Commonwealth, Turkmen President S.A. Niyazov stressed: "The republic firmly stands by its previous position on the conclusion of the Treaty on Friendship and Cooperation With Russia. We must accelerate work on the conclusion of bilateral agreements and complete it by December 20. This future treaty must be implemented exclusively on the basis of the principles of respect for Turkmenistan's sovereignty...."

Cooperation Memorandum Signed With Pakistan

BK1412163291 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 14 Dec 91

[Text] Pakistan and Turkmenia have signed a memorandum of understanding [MOU] to promote bilateral cooperation in various fields. The MOU was signed by Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, the Pakistani minister of state for economic affairs, and Turkmenia's Foreign Minister Avdy Kuliyev in Ashkhabad. Before signing the MOU, the two sides held talks, during which Sardar Asif Ali offered Pakistan's assistance in the economic development of Turkmenia. The Turkmenian leaders proposed setting up Pakistan's consulate in Ashkhabad and starting air services between the two countries.

During a meeting with the Turkmenian President, Saparmurad Niyazov, the Pakistani minister handed a letter from Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, inviting him to visit Pakistan.

The Pakistani delegation also met with Russian Vice President Rutskoy and discussed with him the Afghan problem and matters relating to expansion of economic cooperation between Russia and Pakistan. Rutskoy is arriving in Pakistan on 19 December on a two-day visit.

The Pakistani minister presented a gift of 5,000 tons of rice from the prime minister to Russia to help in meeting the food shortage in Moscow. The Russian vice president thanked Pakistan, saying Russia will never forget this gesture of goodwill.

Communist Party Congress Begins Work

LD1612102691 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0600 GMT 16 Dec 91

[Text] Ashkhabad, 16 Dec (TASS)—The 25th Turkmenistan Communist Party Congress began its work today at 1000. The delegates will discuss the speech delivered by S. Niyazov, party Central Committee first secretary and Turkmenistan president. On 15 December, republican newspapers published a statement by the Turkmenistan Communist Party Central Committee Plenum which characterizes the path it has undertaken and the draft program and rules of the Turkmenistan Democratic Party. A wide-ranging discussion of these took place. It is envisaged that the founding congress of the Turkmenistan Democratic Party and the plenum of its political council will be held today.

Uzbekistan

President Arrives in Turkey on Official Visit

LD1612124391 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1200 GMT 16 Dec 91

[By TASS correspondent Valeriy Litvinenko]

[Text] Ankara, 16 Dec (TASS)—A governmental delegation of the Republic of Uzbekistan, led by President Islam Karimov, arrived here today on an official visit upon the invitation of Turkish President Turgut Ozal. The high guest was met at the capital airport of Esenboga by Turkish President Turgut Ozal, Minister of Foreign Affairs Hikmet Cetin, and other officials. A guard of honor was formed up on the airfield, which was decorated with the state flags of Turkey, the USSR, and Uzbekistan.

The Uzbek leader is to hold negotiations with Turgut Ozal and Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel in the

afternoon. Issues of strengthening bilateral political, economic, and cultural ties between Turkey and Uzbekistan will be examined.

Economic Protocol Signed With Kazakhstan

LD1512122591 Alma-Ata Kazakh Radio Network in Kazakh 1050 GMT 9 Dec 91

[Text] A 1992 agreement on trade and economic cooperation between the Republic of Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan was signed in Tashkent on 7 December. It was decided to set up and expand direct economic ties, mutual supplies of raw materials, and consumer goods in accordance with 1990 levels. One of the interesting articles in the agreement is that Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan agree on rendering mutual assistance in case of natural disasters. Joint conservation projects will be organized, including improving the sanitary ecological conditions of the Aral region. The agreement was signed by Uzbek Vice President Mirsaidov and Kazakh Prime Minister Tereshchenko. Uzbek President Karimov met Tereshchenko on the same day.

Muslims Seize Former Communist Party Building

LD1412001191 Moscow All-Union Radio First Program Radio-1 Network in Russian 2000 GMT 11 Dec 91

[From the "New Wave" program]

[Text] In Namangan, Uzbekistan, Muslims have seized the building of the former Communist Party Oblast Committee and have been holding it for almost 24 hours. A significant proportion of the believers belong to the Islamic Rebirth Party, which is not registered in Uzbekistan. They are putting forward demands for the immediate resignation of President Islam Karimov, the establishment of an Islamic state, and the handover of the premises which they are occupying in order that it may be turned into an Islamic center.

The atmosphere in the city is outwardly calm, urban transport and enterprises are operating, and there are no clashes with the militia. There is no sign of people taking part in mass meetings on the city's streets.

Official Condemns Action

OW1312053591 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2027 GMT 12 Dec 91

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Muslims of Namangan (Uzbekistan) have been holding for several days the building of the regional Communist Party committee. They demand it should be handed over to the Muslim community for an Islamic Center.

The Uzbek Deputy-Premier Ismail Jurabekov visiting Namangan has told journalists he condemned the people's actions in this unauthorized occupation of the building. At the same time he criticized the regional leaders who refused to contact the clergy and disposed of the property in secret "to the annoyance of some Muslim circles."

According to I. Jurabekov the situation is under control and coming back to normal.